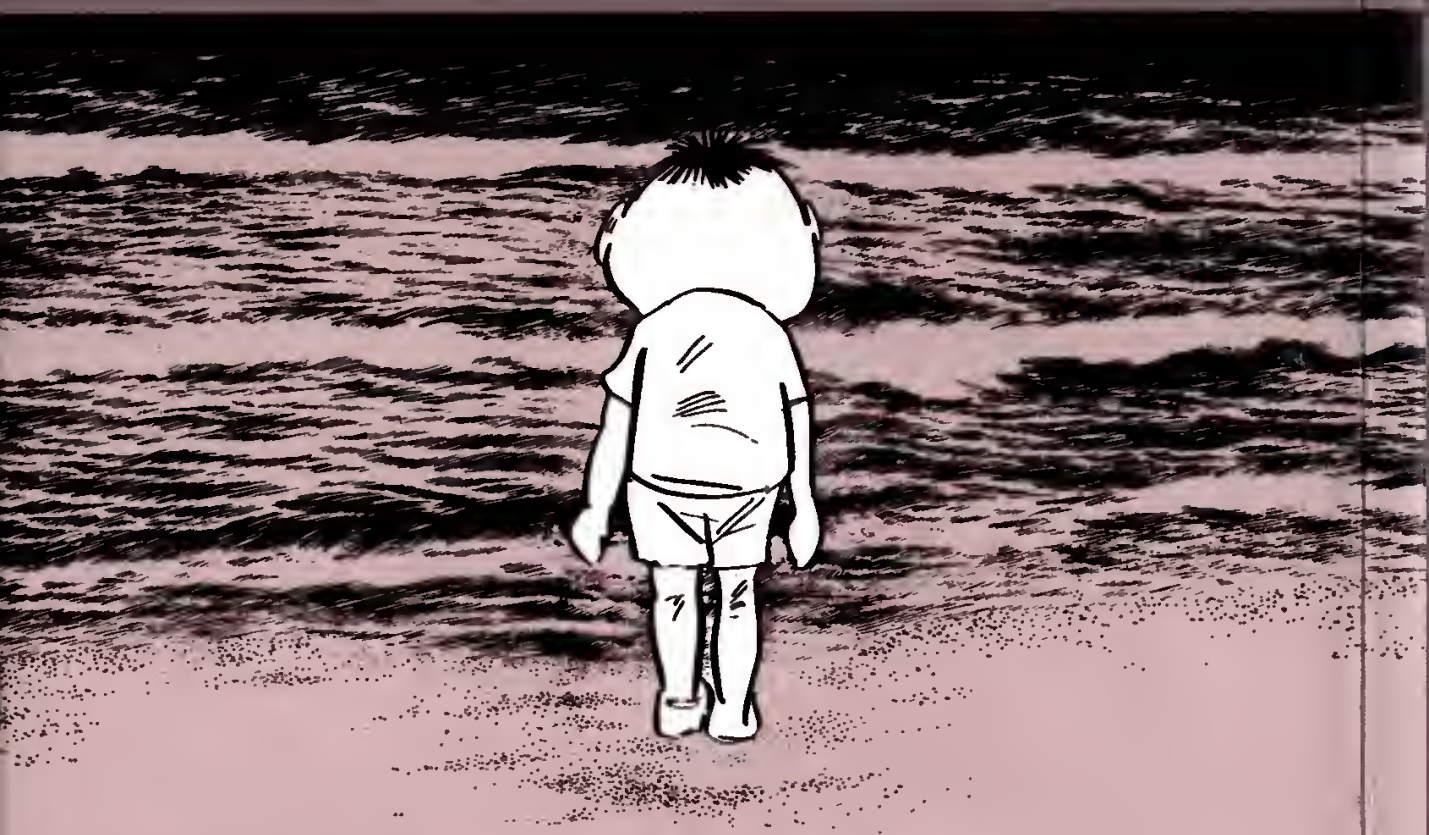
SHIGERU MIZUKI



3, STREET OF MYSTERIES

Born on March 8th, 1922 in Sakaiminato, a small fishing village in Tottori Prefecture, Shigeru Mizuki is one of the best known mangaka in Japan, with a long career to his credit. Mizuki, whose true name is Shigeru Mura, was a curious boy with a happy childhood. He loved to eat, draw, and daydream about the yokai that NonNonBa, an elderly woman who believed in them with all her heart, would tell him about.

When he was scarcely twenty he was enlisted in the Japanese army and sent to the jungles of New Guinea, where he lived through a true nightmare: he contracted malaria, witnessed the deaths of the bulk of his companions and lost his left arm in a bombardment. In 1957, after a life already too rich with wounds and recollections, he began his career as a mangaka, becoming one of the great storytellers of his country. Throughout all his work, Mizuki hasn't stopped showing his profound understanding of human behavior and the empathy he's always felt for all living things.

SHIGERU MIZUKI

3, STREET OF MYSTERIES

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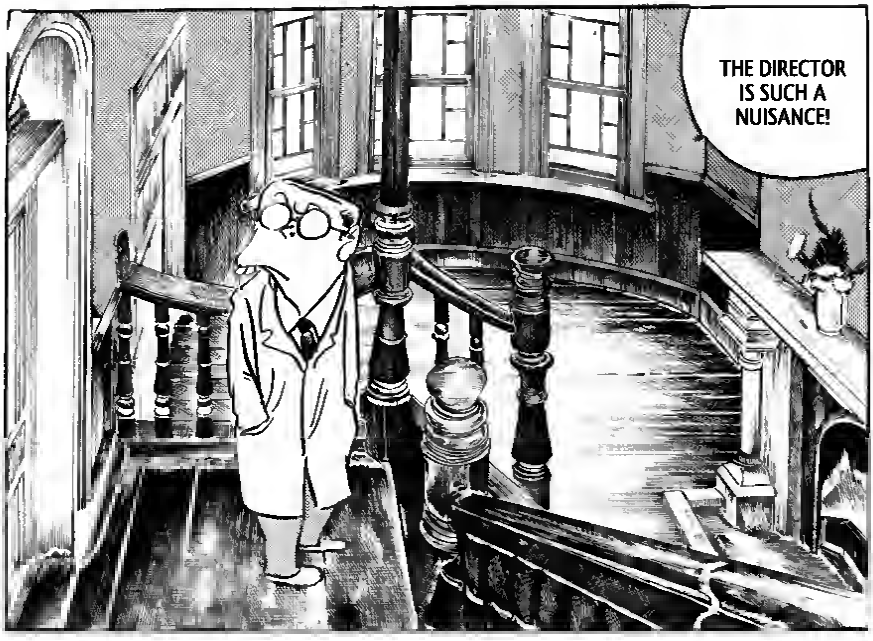
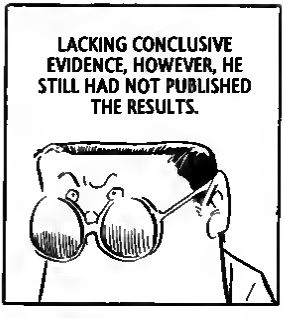
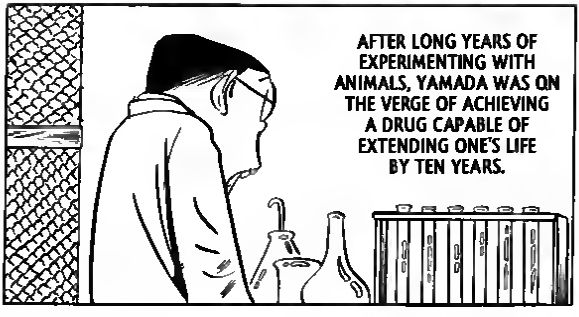
3, STREET OF MYSTERIES

PRESENTED BY
HAPPY SCANS

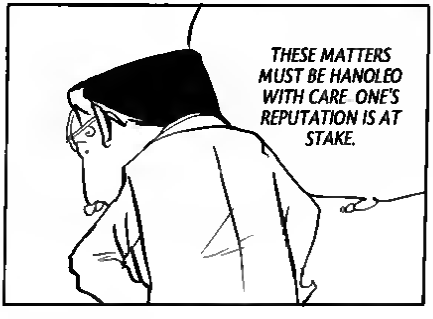
HEY, YAMADA.
YAMADA WORKED FOR A SMALL PHARMACEUTICAL BUSINESS.
WHEN WILL YOU HAVE THE MEDICINE OF IMMORTALITY AND ETERNAL YOUTH READY? WE'VE STAKED THE FUTURE OF THE COMPANY ON THAT MEDICINE.
I'VE SPENT TEN YEARS GIVING YOU A LITTLE MORE TIME.
MAN... YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT IT'S A MATTER OF A VERY STRENUOUS INVESTIGATION... GIVE ME A LITTLE MORE TIME.
I'LL TRY TO FINISH THE PROJECT BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR.
I KNOW, SIR.
A BUSINESS DOESN'T DEDICATE ITSELF TO CHARITY, YAMADA.


THE DIRECTOR IS SUCH A NUISANCE!


LACKING CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE, HOWEVER, HE STILL HAD NOT PUBLISHED THE RESULTS.

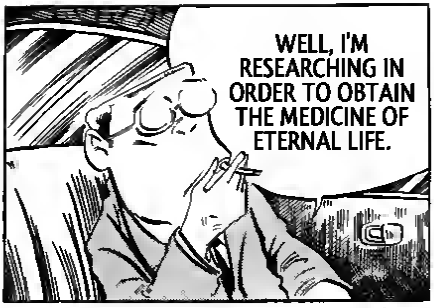

AFTER LONG YEARS OF EXPERIMENTING WITH ANIMALS, YAMADA WAS ON THE VERGE OF ACHIEVING A DRUG CAPABLE OF EXTENDING ONE'S LIFE BY TEN YEARS.

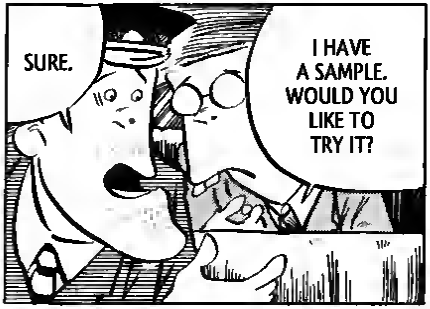
ANYWAY, WHEN I REVEAL MY DISCOVERY TO THE WORLD, I'M CERTAIN THEY'LL TREAT ME AS I DESERVE.

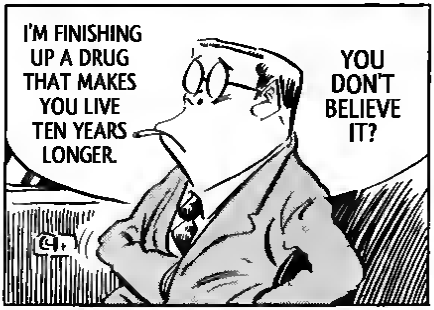

THESE MATTERS MUST BE HANDLED WITH CARE. ONE'S REPUTATION IS AT STAKE.

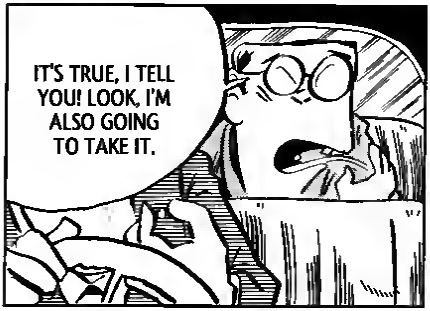
SFX: HA HA HA
はははは
THE LAST TRAIN HAS ALREADY GONE. IN SHORT, I'LL HAVE TO CATCH A CAB
THAT DOES IT! I'M RUNNING VERY LATE.
SFX: VROOM
TO NUMBER 3 ON THE STREET OF MYSTERIES.
WHERE SHOULD I TAKE YOU?
ARE YOU DEVOTING YOURSELF TO SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS?
WHAT A WEIRD ADDRESS!

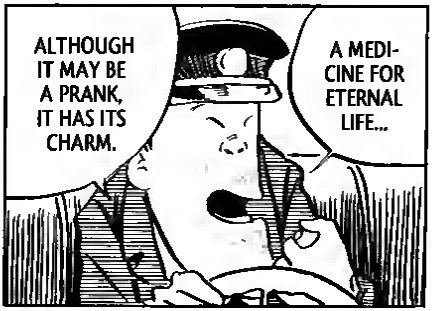
ETERNAL LIFE? IS THAT POSSIBLE?

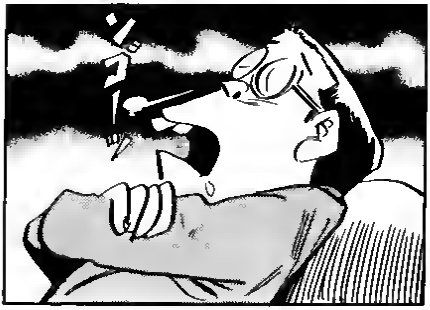

WELL, I'M RESEARCHING IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE MEDICINE OF ETERNAL LIFE.

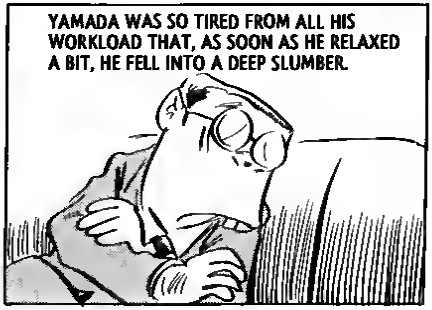

SURE.
I HAVE A SAMPLE. WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY IT?

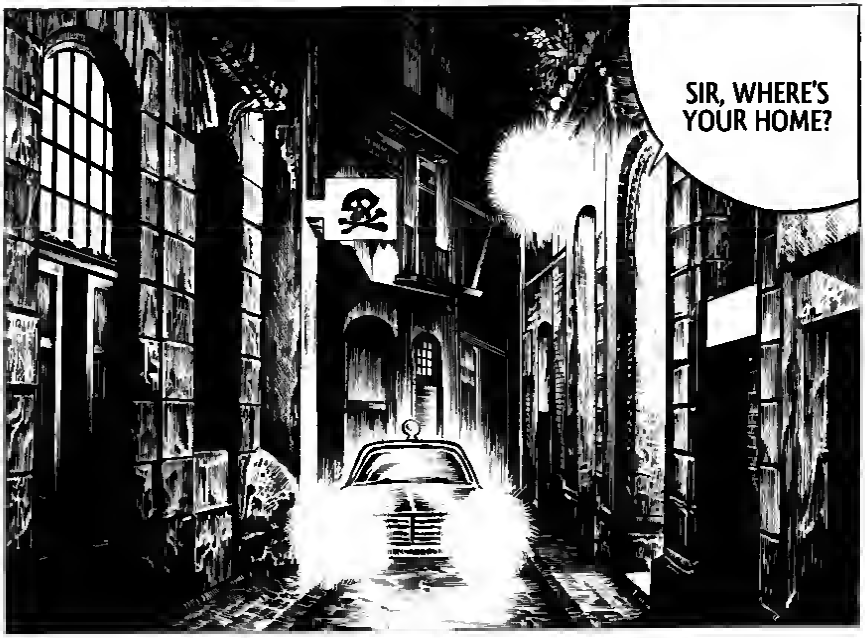

I'M FINISHING UP A DRUG THAT MAKES YOU LIVE TEN YEARS LONGER.
YOU DON'T BELIEVE IT?

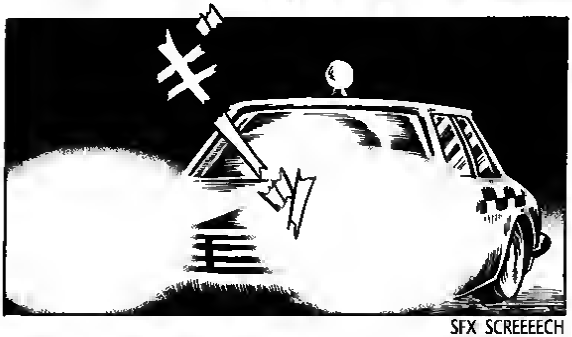

IT'S TRUE, I TELL YOU! LOOK, I'M ALSO GOING TO TAKE IT.


ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE A PRANK, IT HAS ITS CHARM.
A MEDICINE FOR ETERNAL LIFE...

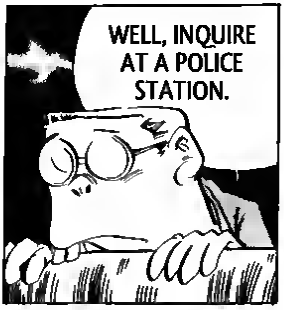

SFX ZZZZZ

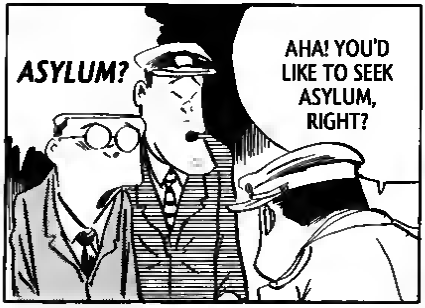

YAMADA WAS SO TIRED FROM ALL HIS WORKLOAD THAT, AS SOON AS HE RELAXED A BIT, HE FELL INTO A DEEP SLUMBER.

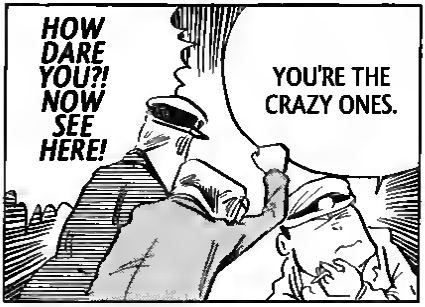

SIR, WHERE'S YOUR HOME?

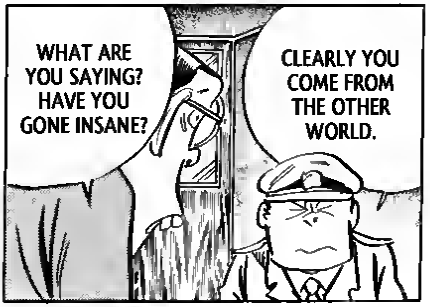


SFX SCREEEECH

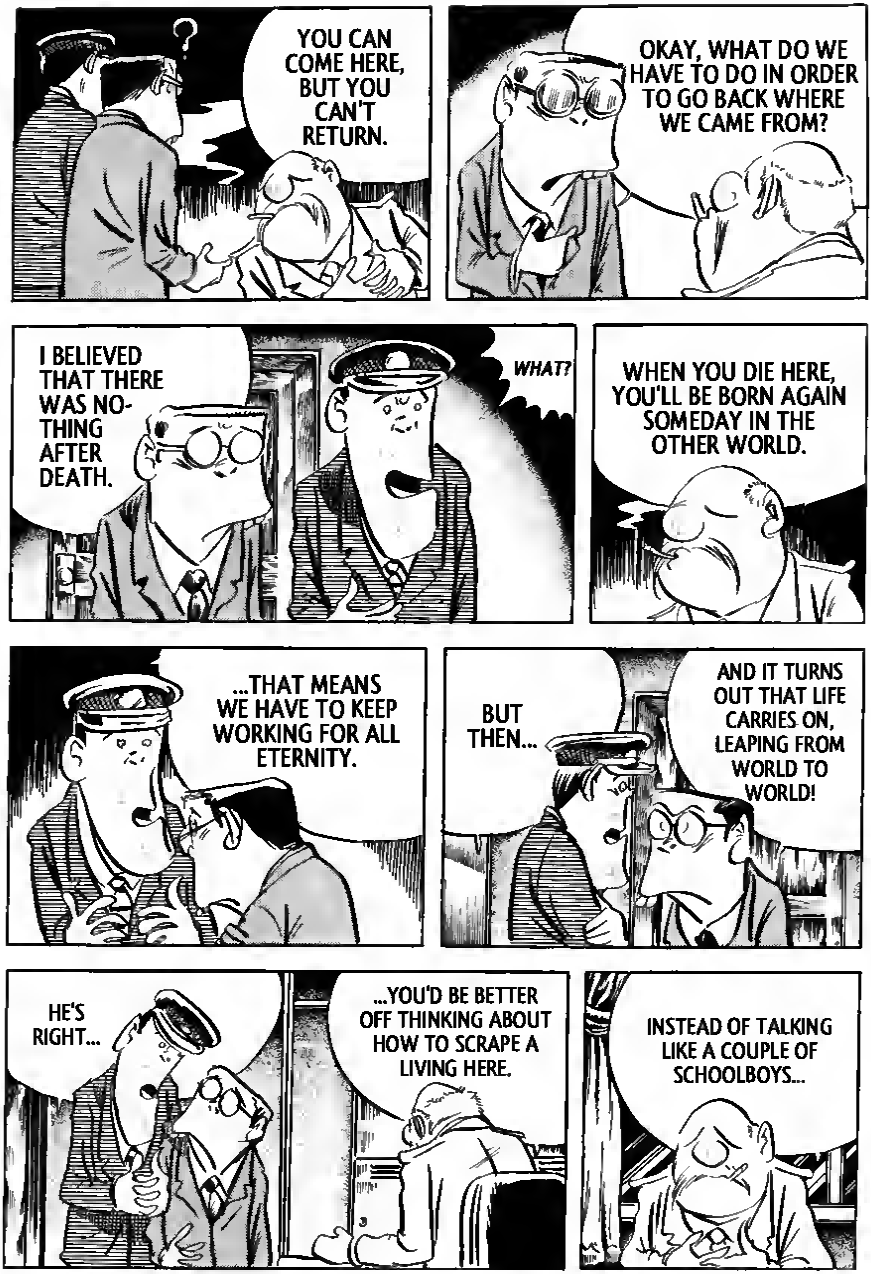




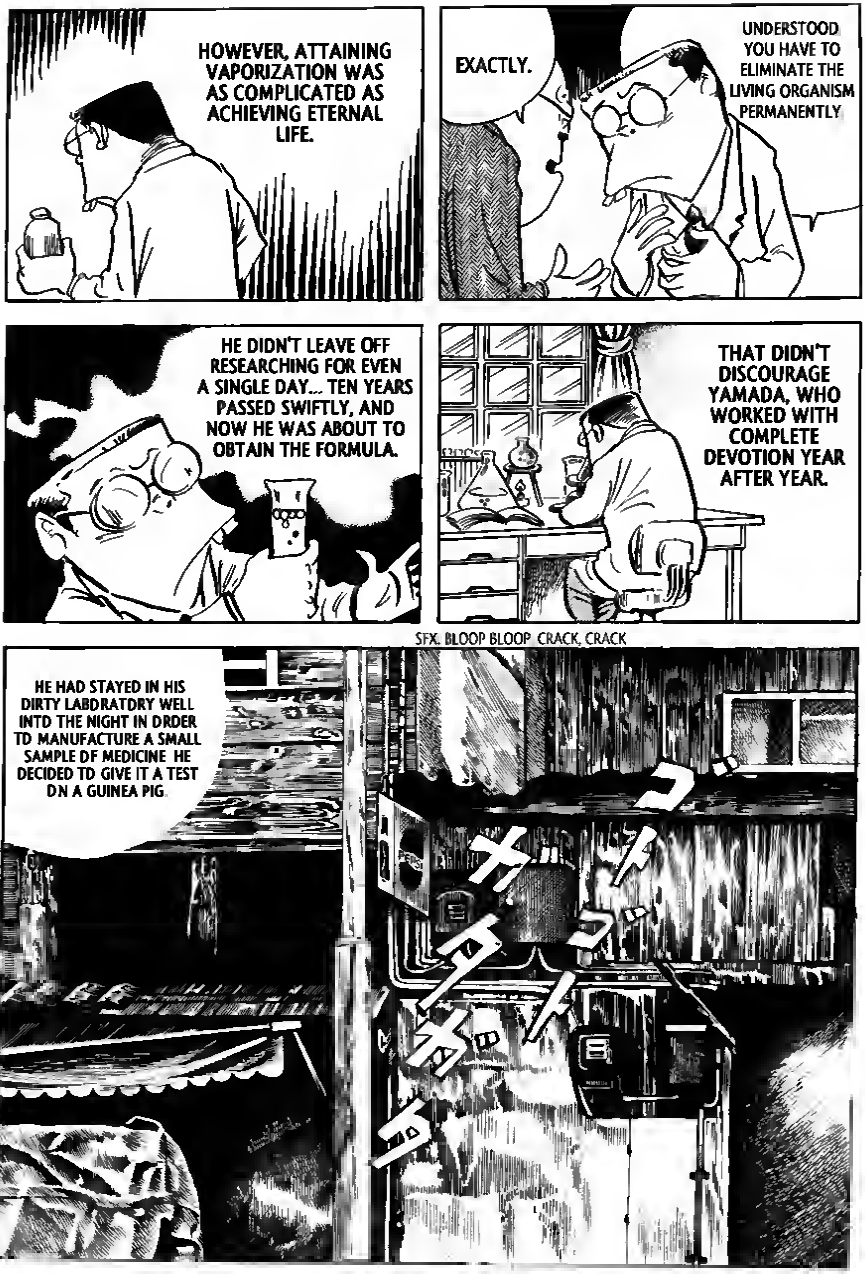




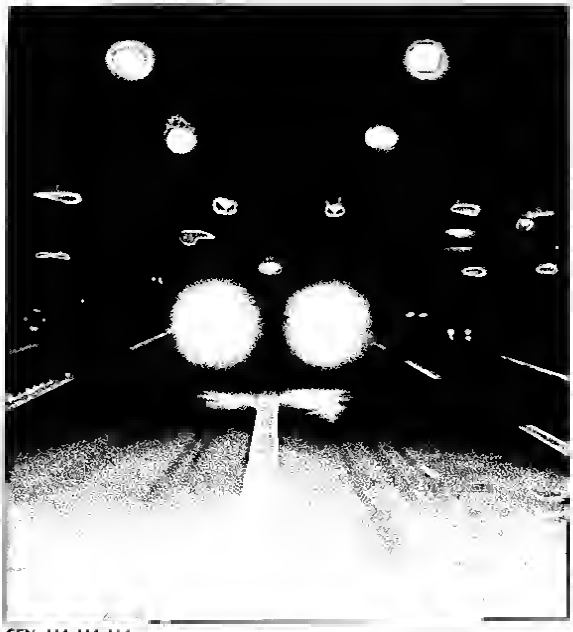
THE OLD BUREAUCRAT IN CHARGE
BOTH OF THEM WERE CONFINED IN THE COURSE OF THE ALTERCATION. WHEN THEY TRIED TO FILE A REPORT, THEY FOUND THEMSELVES IN A PLACE NAMED "ASYLUM OFFICE."
LET'S SEE...
...WEARILY BEGAN TO SORT THEM OUT.
WE THOUGHT THAT WE WERE STILL IN OUR WORLD.
THIS SORT OF THING HAPPENS OFTEN.
YOU CAN REST EASY.
YOU GUYS HAVE COME FROM THE OTHER WORLD.
SO IT SEEMS.
THEN THE COP WAS RIGHT.
WHO WOULD HAVE GUESSED THAT WE'RE IN THE GREAT BEYOND!


YOU CAN COME HERE, BUT YOU CAN'T RETURN.
?
OKAY, WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO IN ORDER TO GO BACK WHERE WE CAME FROM?
I BELIEVED THAT THERE WAS NO-THING AFTER DEATH.
WHAT?
WHEN YOU DIE HERE, YOU'LL BE BORN AGAIN SOMEDAY IN THE OTHER WORLD.
...THAT MEANS WE HAVE TO KEEP WORKING FOR ALL ETERNITY.
BUT THEN...
AND IT TURNS OUT THAT LIFE CARRIES ON, LEAPING FROM WORLD TO WORLD!
HE'S RIGHT...
...YOU'D BE BETTER OFF THINKING ABOUT HOW TO SCRAPE A LIVING HERE.
INSTEAD OF TALKING LIKE A COUPLE OF SCHOOLBOYS...

YOU WILL DIRECT YOUR EFFORTS TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DRUG UPON WHICH WE'VE STAKED THE FUTURE OF THE COMPANY THE VAPORIZATION MEDICINE
THANKS TO THE INTERCESSION FROM THE ASYLUM OFFICE, YAMADA STARTED WORKING. . AT ANOTHER PHARMACEUTICAL BUSINESS.
VAPORIZATION?
ESSENTIALLY.
AND EVEN IF YOU DIE IN THE OTHER WORLD, YOU'LL BE BORN AGAIN IN THIS ONE. AND IT STARTS OVER.
THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU KNOW THAT WHEN SOMEONE DIES IN THIS WORLD, THEY'RE REBORN IN THE OTHER.
IN OTHER WORDS, ONE HAS TO VANISH.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
ETERNAL PEACE IS ONLY POSSIBLE THROUGH VAPORIZATION.

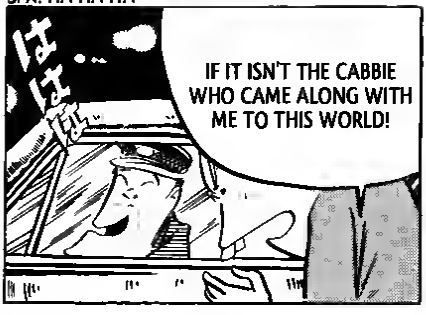

HOWEVER, ATTAINING VAPORIZATION WAS AS COMPLICATED AS ACHIEVING ETERNAL LIFE.
EXACTLY.
UNDERSTOOD YOU HAVE TO ELIMINATE THE LIVING ORGANISM PERMANENTLY
HE DIDN'T LEAVE OFF RESEARCHING FOR EVEN A SINGLE DAY... TEN YEARS PASSED SWIFTLY, AND NOW HE WAS ABOUT TO OBTAIN THE FORMULA.
THAT DIDN'T DISCOURAGE YAMADA, WHO WORKED WITH COMPLETE DEVOTION YEAR AFTER YEAR.
SFX. BLOOP BLOOP CRACK, CRACK
HE HAD STAYED IN HIS DIRTY LABDRATDRY WELL INTD THE NIGHT IN DRDER TD MANUFACTURE A SMALL SAMPLE DF MEDICINE HE DECIDED TD GIVE IT A TEST DN A GUINEA PIG.

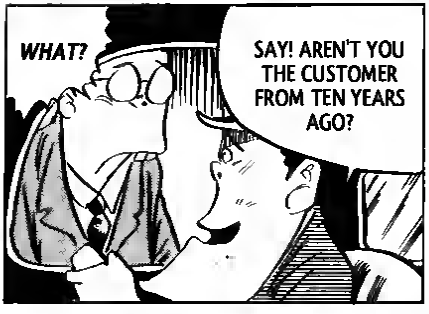
SFX: CHAK CHAK
SFX: NOM NOM
IT DISAP-PEARED!
SFX: POP
SFX: OH
SFX: HA HA HA
I HAVE TO REPORT THIS TO THE COMPANY.
IT WAS A SUCCESS! THE GUINEA PIG HAS COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED.
WHEW, LOOK HOW LATE IT'S GOTTEN.

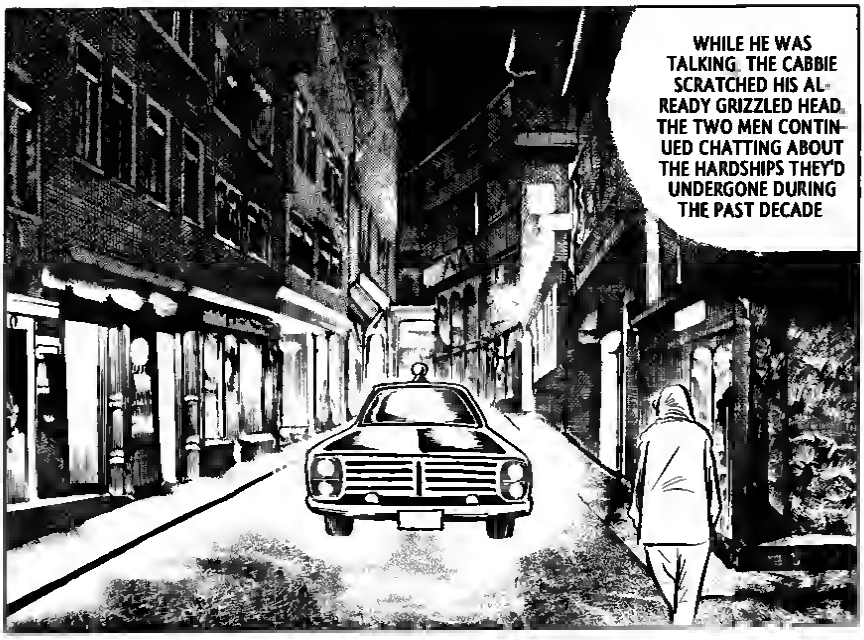


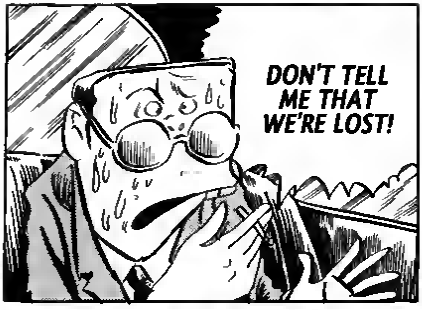
SFX: HA HA HA

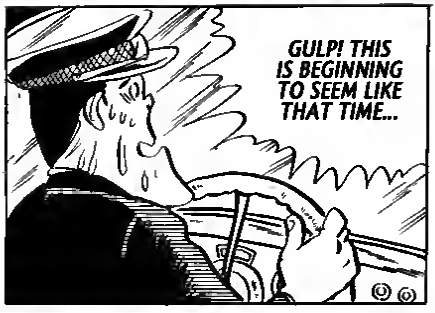
SFX: HEEEY!





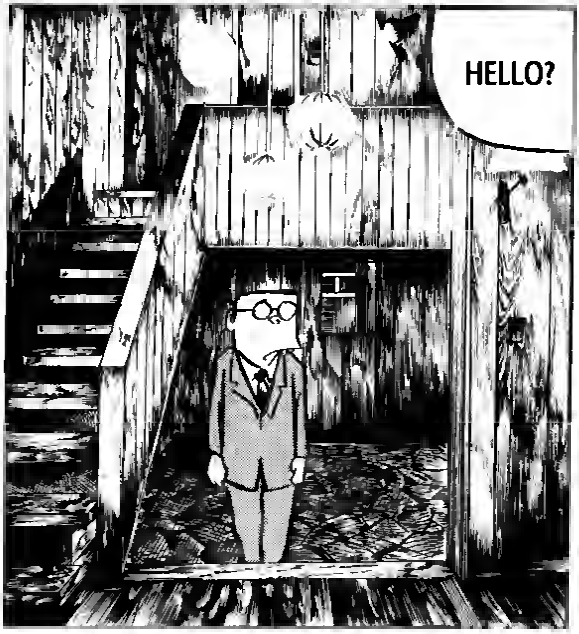

WHILE HE WAS TALKING, THE CABBIE SCRATCHED HIS ALREADY GRIZZLED HEAD. THE TWO MEN CONTINUED CHATTING ABOUT THE HARDSHIPS THEY'D UNDERGONE DURING THE PAST DECADE


DON'T TELL ME THAT WE'RE LOST!


GULP! THIS IS BEGINNING TO SEEM LIKE THAT TIME...

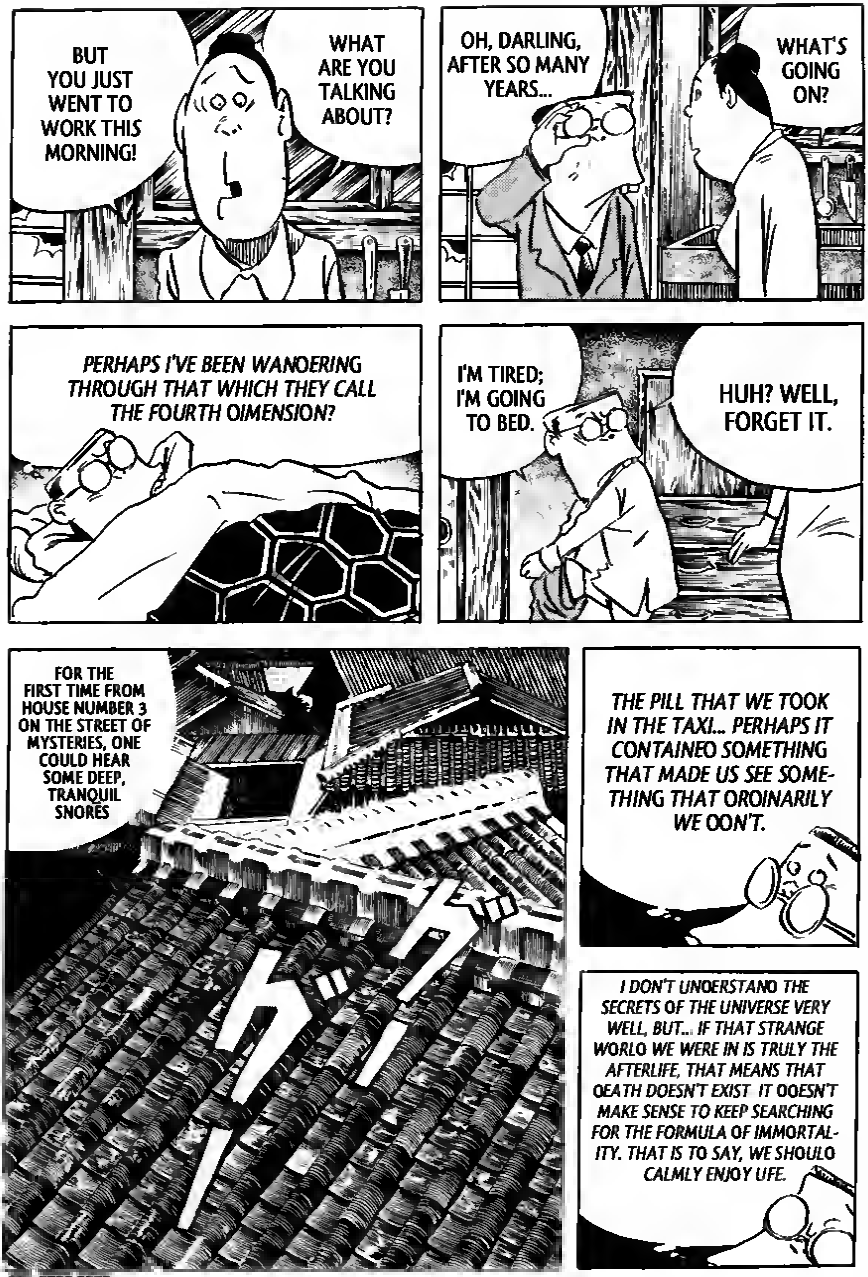
THEY DIDN'T HAVE ANY OPTION BUT TO KEEP CIRCLING ABOUT AIMLESSLY.

LOOK, DOESN'T THIS COUNTRYSIDE FEEL FAMILIAR TO YOU?


HELLO?

WE'VE RETURNED TO OUR WORLD!

HOW DELIGHT-FUL!


BUT YOU JUST WENT TO WORK THIS MORNING!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
OH, DARLING, AFTER SO MANY YEARS...
WHAT'S GOING ON?
PERHAPS I'VE BEEN WANDERING THROUGH THAT WHICH THEY CALL THE FOURTH DIMENSION?
I'M TIRED; I'M GOING TO BED.
HUH? WELL, FORGET IT.
FOR THE FIRST TIME FROM HOUSE NUMBER 3 ON THE STREET OF MYSTERIES, ONE COULD HEAR SOME DEEP, TRANQUIL SNORES
SFX ZZZZ ZZZZ
THE PILL THAT WE TOOK IN THE TAXI... PERHAPS IT CONTAINED SOMETHING THAT MADE US SEE SOMETHING THAT ORDINARILY WE DON'T.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE VERY WELL, BUT... IF THAT STRANGE WORLD WE WERE IN IS TRULY THE AFTERLIFE, THAT MEANS THAT DEATH DOESN'T EXIST. IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE TO KEEP SEARCHING FOR THE FORMULA OF IMMORTALITY. THAT IS TO SAY, WE SHOULD CALMLY ENJOY LIFE.

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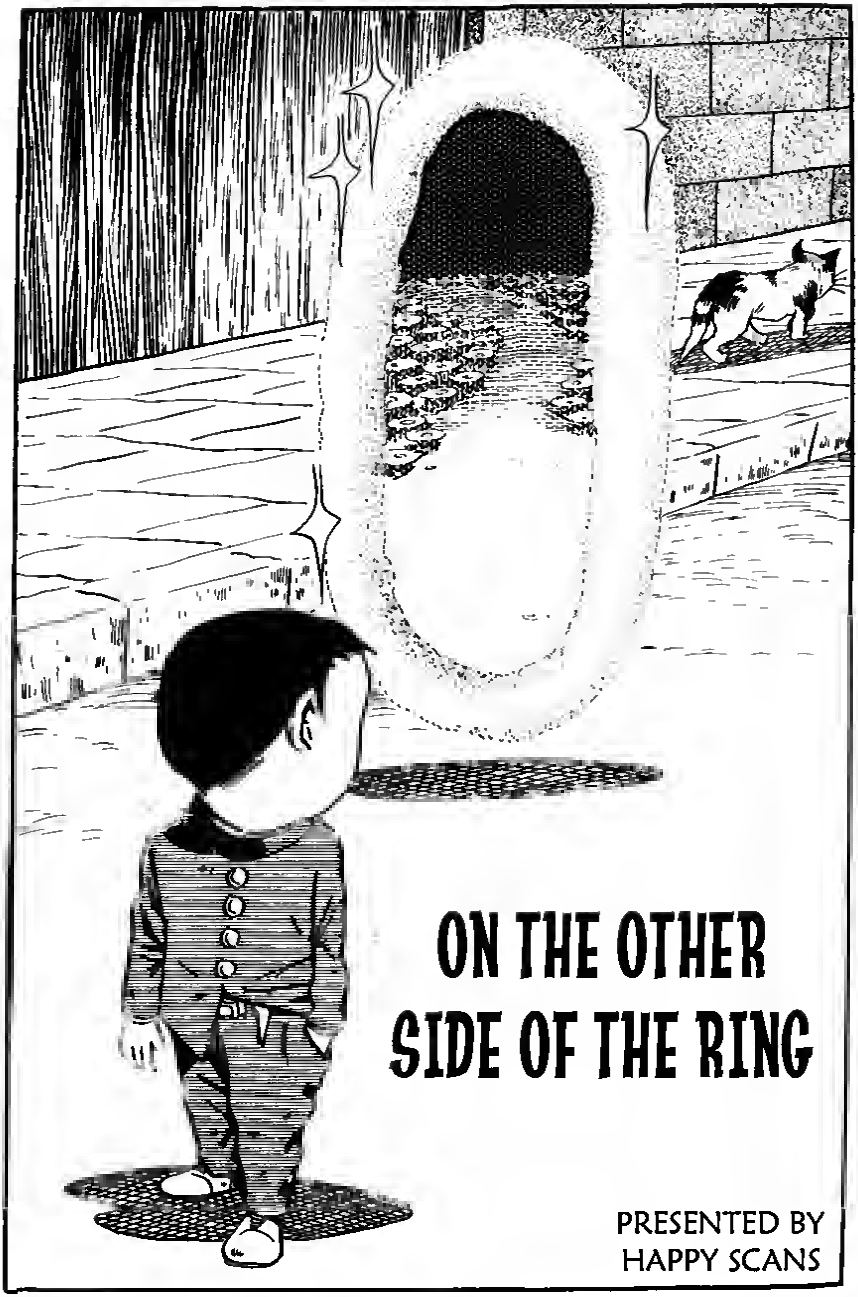
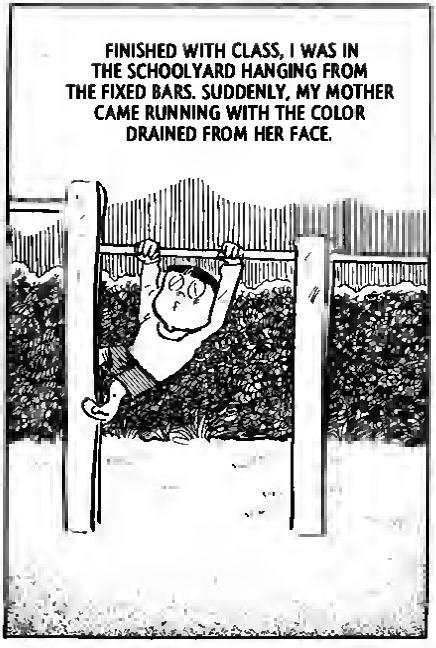
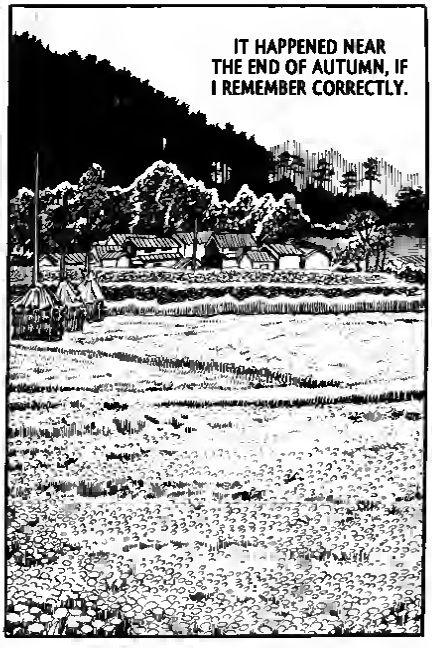
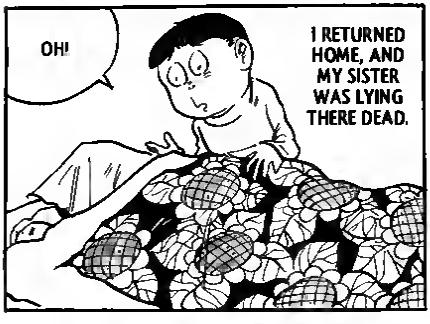
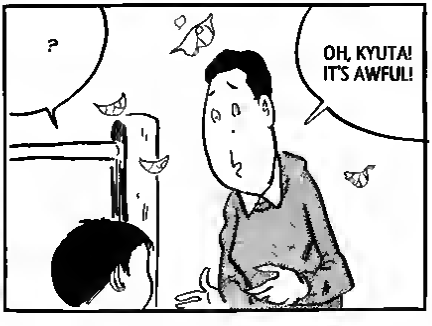
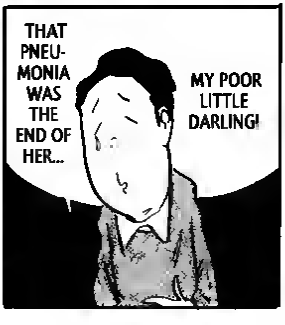

ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF THE RING
PRESENTED BY
HAPPY SCANS


FINISHED WITH CLASS, I WAS IN THE SCHOOLYARD HANGING FROM THE FIXED BARS. SUDDENLY, MY MOTHER CAME RUNNING WITH THE COLOR DRAINED FROM HER FACE.



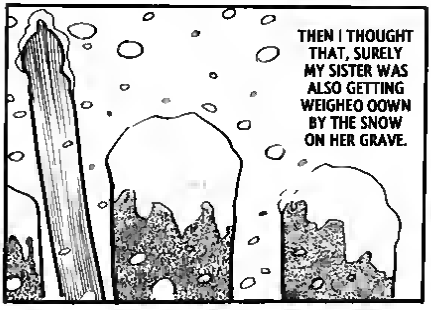


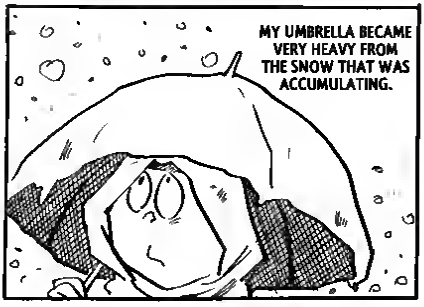


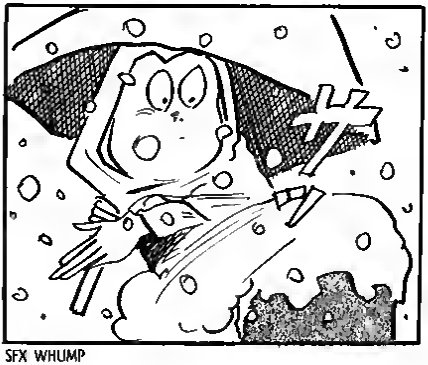


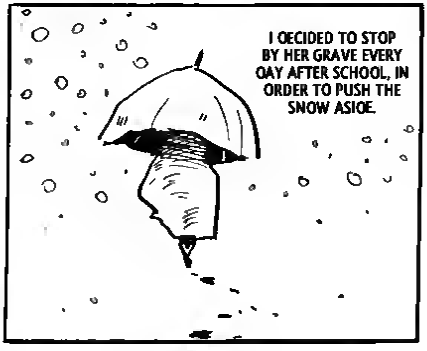
SFX SNIFF SNIFF

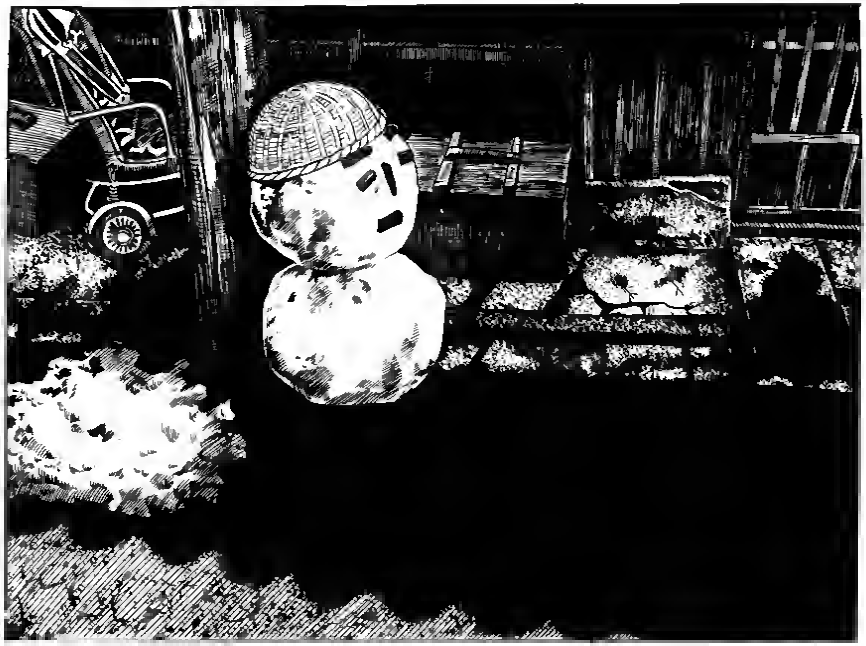
ONE MONTH LATER A SEVERE SNOWSTORM FELL.
MY SISTER HAD GONE TO SOME OTHER PLACE, NEVER TO RETURN.

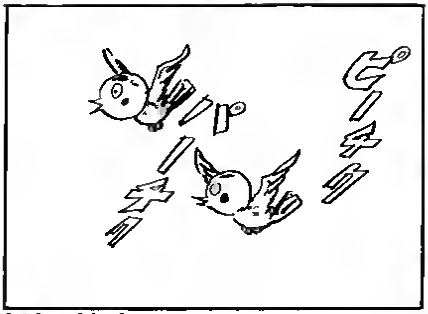

THEN I THOUGHT THAT, SURELY MY SISTER WAS ALSO GETTING WEIGHED DOWN BY THE SNOW ON HER GRAVE.

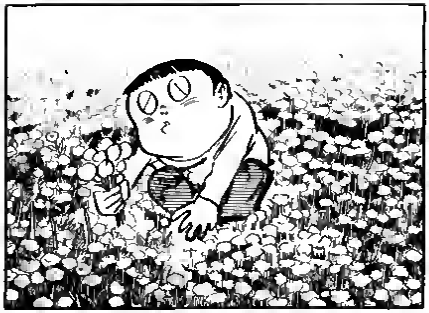

MY UMBRELLA BECAME VERY HEAVY FROM THE SNOW THAT WAS ACCUMULATING.


SFX WHUMP

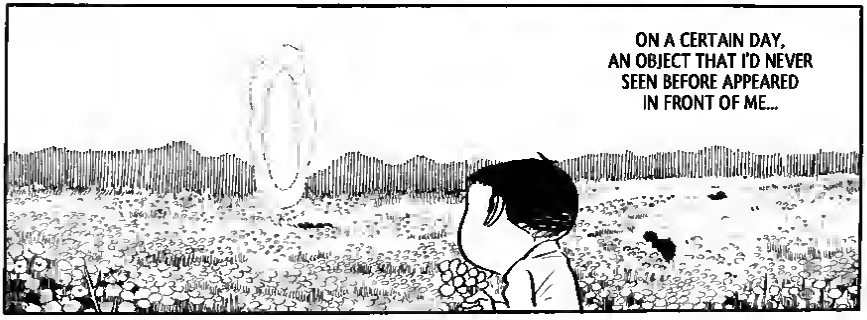

I DECIDED TO STOP BY HER GRAVE EVERY DAY AFTER SCHOOL, IN ORDER TO PUSH THE SNOW ASIDE.

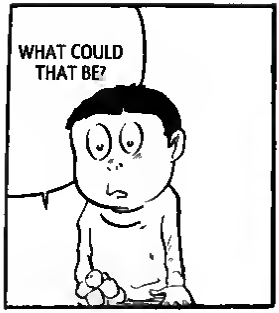




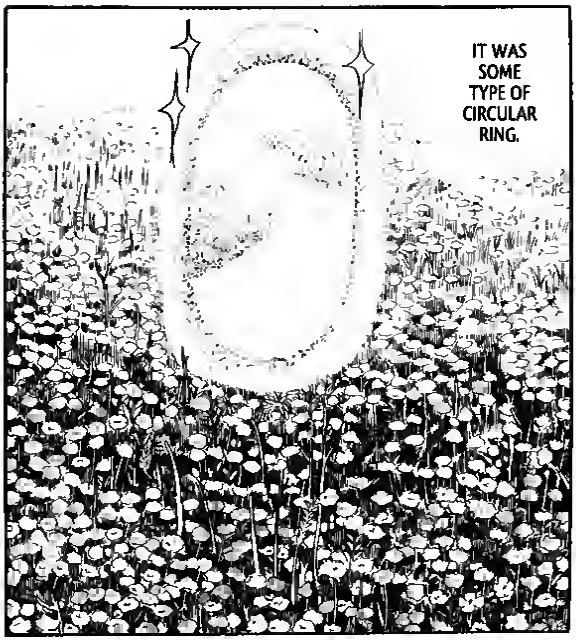


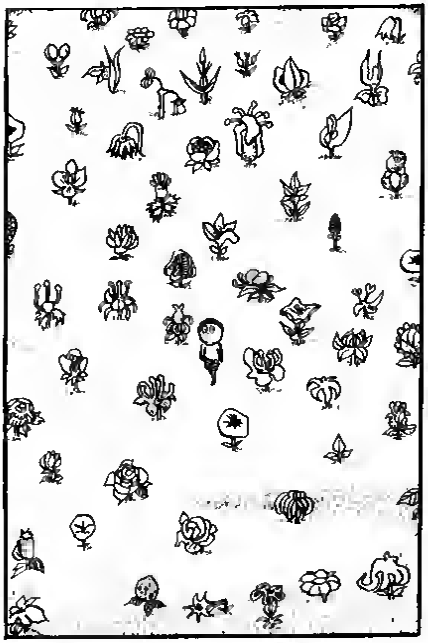
SFX: CHEEEEP CHEEP

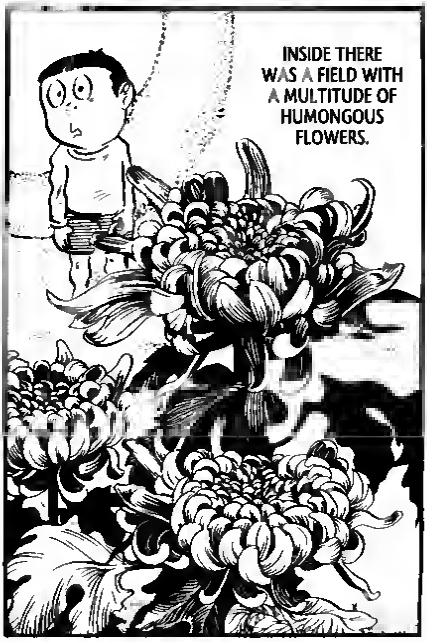



WHAT COULD THAT BE?

I'M GOING TO GO INSIDE...

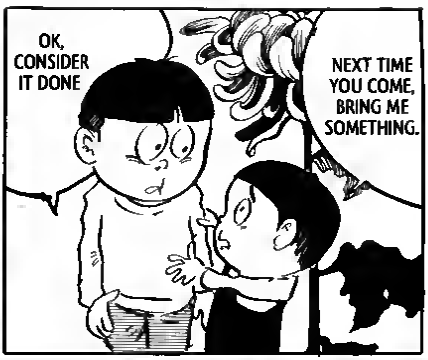

IT WAS SOME TYPE OF CIRCULAR RING.

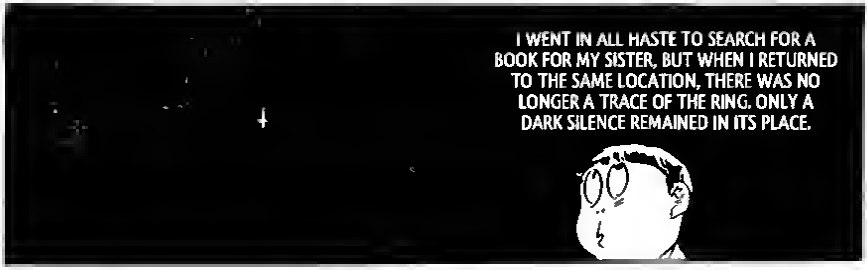



INSIDE THERE WAS A FIELD WITH A MULTITUDE OF HUMONGOUS FLOWERS.

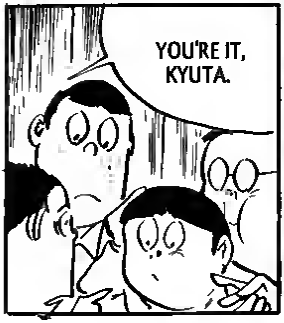
KYUTA!
HUH?
HANAKO! SO YOU WERE HERE.
?
I CAN'T... THEY WON'T LET ME GO.
THEN COME WITH ME! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE
THIS IS A VERY SAD PLACE.
AND NO STORY BOOKS, TOO.
TOY?
THERE'S NOT EVEN A SINGLE TOY HERE.
OR PERHAPS WHAT THEY CALL LIMBO?
COULD THIS BE THE WORLD OF THE DEAD?

IT TOOK ME QUITE A WHILE TO FIND THE EXIT. NIGHT HAD ALREADY FALLEN OUTSIDE.

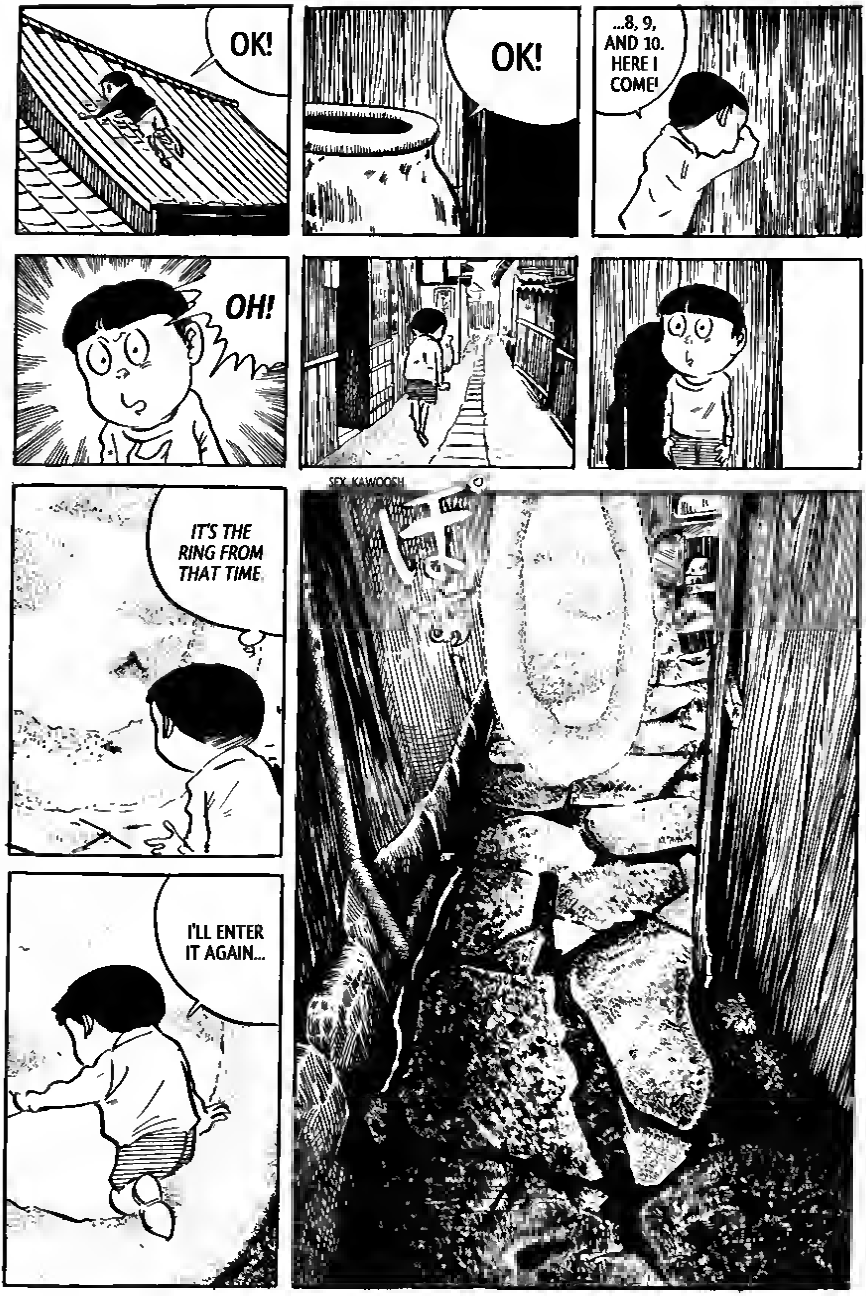

OK, CONSIDER IT DONE
NEXT TIME YOU COME, BRING ME SOMETHING.

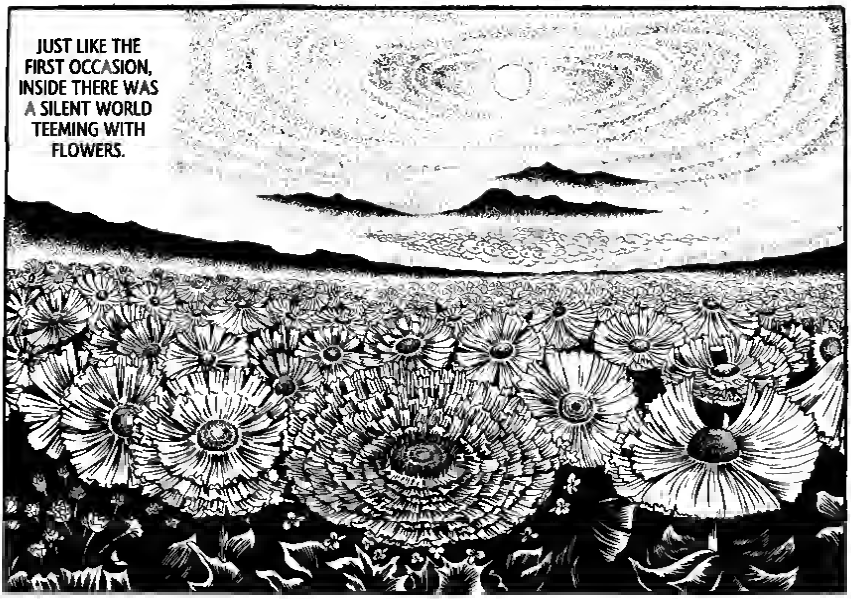

I WENT IN ALL HASTE TO SEARCH FOR A BOOK FOR MY SISTER, BUT WHEN I RETURNED TO THE SAME LOCATION, THERE WAS NO LONGER A TRACE OF THE RING. ONLY A DARK SILENCE REMAINED IN ITS PLACE.

SCISSORS!
ROCK, PAPER...

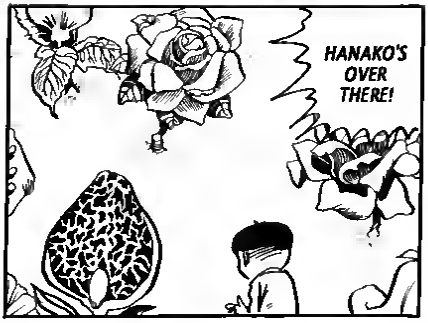

YOU'RE IT, KYUTA.

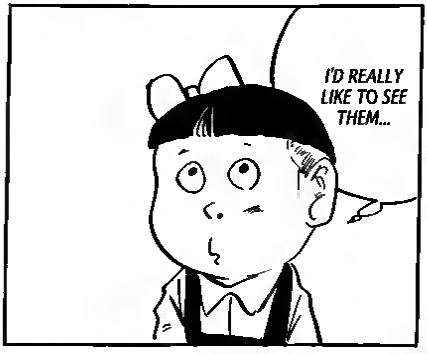
ABOUT A YEAR HAD PASSED, I FOUND MYSELF PLAYING HIDE-AND-SEEK WITH MY FRIENDS...

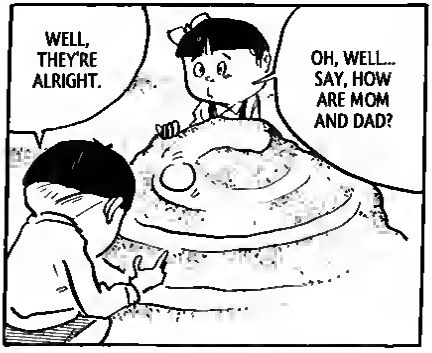

OK!
OK!
...8, 9, AND 10. HERE I COME!
OH!
IT'S THE RING FROM THAT TIME.
I'LL ENTER IT AGAIN...
SFX: KAWOOSH


JUST LIKE THE FIRST OCCASION, INSIDE THERE WAS A SILENT WORLD TEEMING WITH FLOWERS.

AM NOT! IT'S JUST THAT I COULDN'T FIND THE ENTRANCE.
YOU'RE A LIAR.

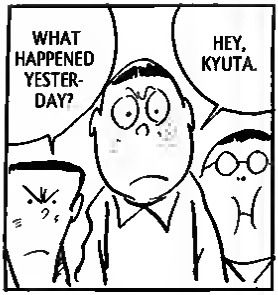

HANAKO'S OVER THERE!


I'D REALLY LIKE TO SEE THEM...


WELL, THEY'RE ALRIGHT.
OH, WELL... SAY, HOW ARE MOM AND DAD?

NO!
I HAVE TO GO NOW.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, NO? I CAN'T BE HERE ALL THE TIME.
DO YOU PROMISE?
TOMORROW I'LL COME BACK WITH A DOLL AND A PICTURE BOOK.
I WAS PLAYING WITH HER FOR FOUR OR FIVE HOURS UNTIL I BEGAN TO GET HUNGRY.
I PROMISE YOU THAT I'LL BRING YOU STUFF TOMORROW.
YES, I PROMISE.

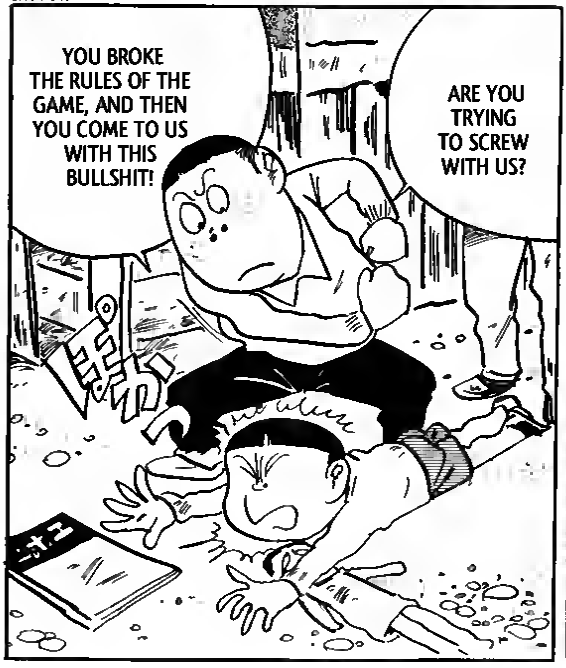
TO HANAKO?
I'M GOING TO TAKE TOYS TO HANAKO.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, KYUTA?
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?
HOW THOUGHT-LESS!
BUT I KNOW WHERE SHE IS.
SON, HANAKO HAS DIED.
BESIDE THE TRASHCAN.
WHERE?
THE THING IS, I'VE SEEN HER.
JUST WHEN WE WERE TRYING TO GET USED TO HER ABSENCE.
BUT I REALLY SAW HER...
I KNOW THAT ALREADY.
LISTEN, KYUTA. YOU'VE GOT THINGS MIXED UP IN YOUR HEAD. WHEN A PERSON DIES YOU CAN'T SEE THEM AGAIN, EVEN IF THEY'RE FAMILY.

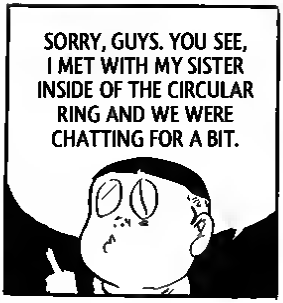

WHAT HAPPENED YESTERDAY?
HEY, KYUTA.

THE NEXT DAY I WENT BACK TO WHERE THE TRASHCAN WAS, WITH THE BOOK AND THE DOLL. BUT, HOWEVER LONG I WAITED, THE RING WASN'T SHOWING UP.

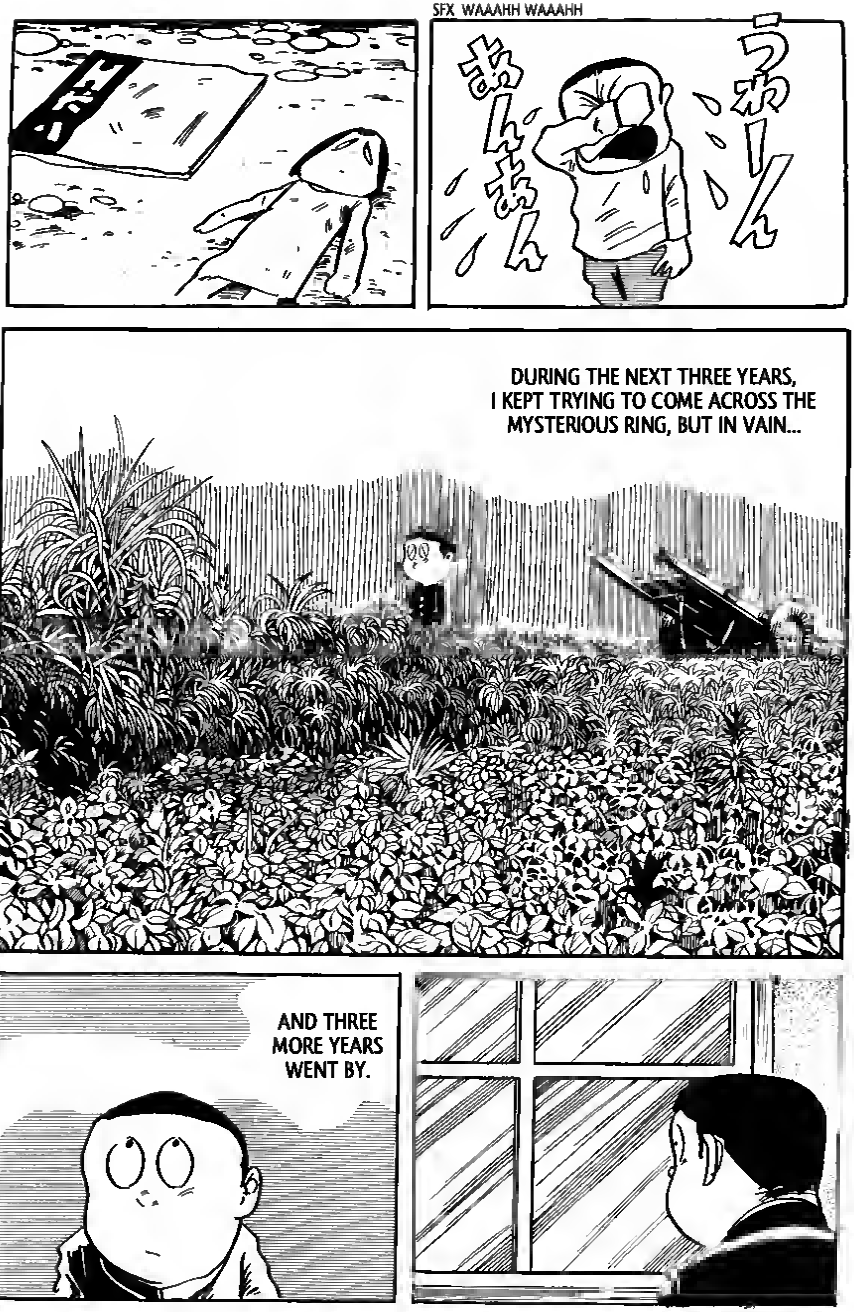
AH, THE HIDE-AND-SEEK...

SFX POW

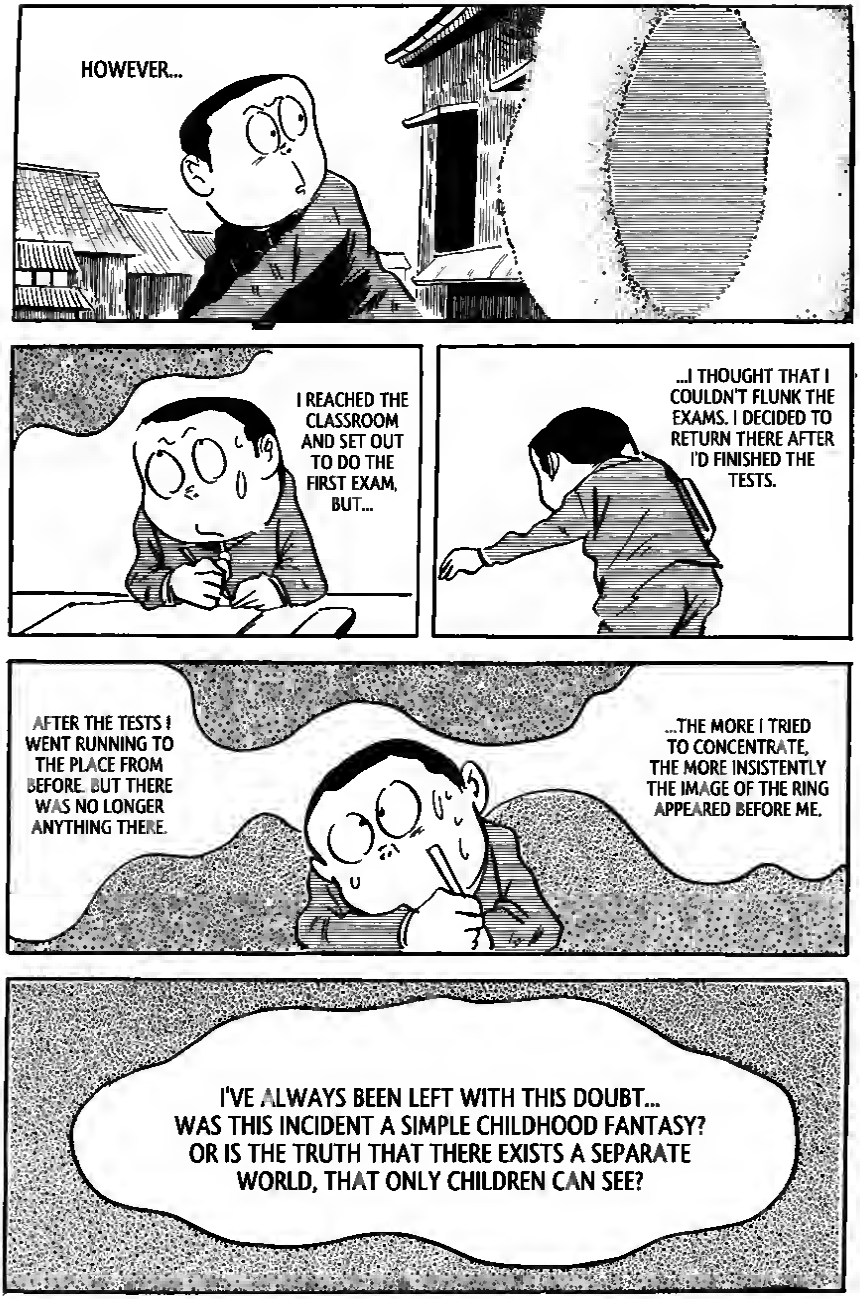

YOU BROKE THE RULES OF THE GAME, AND THEN YOU COME TO US WITH THIS BULLSHIT!
ARE YOU TRYING TO SCREW WITH US?


SORRY, GUYS. YOU SEE, I MET WITH MY SISTER INSIDE OF THE CIRCULAR RING AND WE WERE CHATTING FOR A BIT.

I'VE ALSO AGREED TO MEET WITH HER TODAY. I'M GOING TO GIVE HER THIS STUFF.

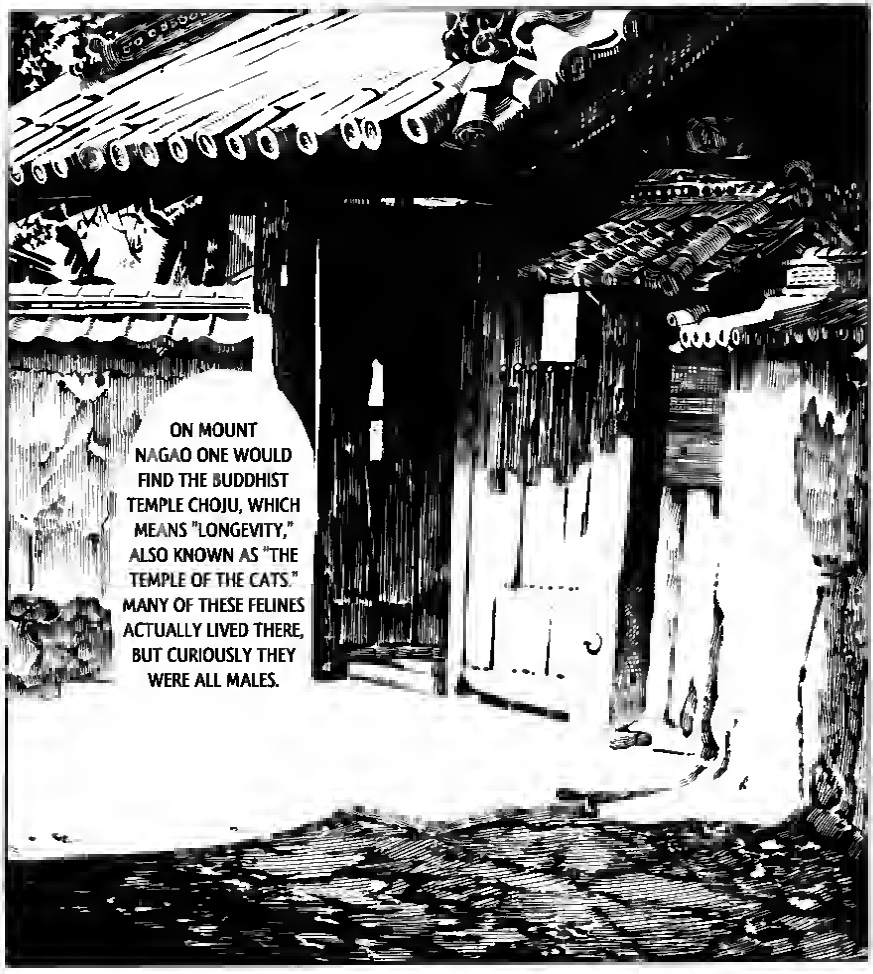

SFX WAAAHH WAAAHH
DURING THE NEXT THREE YEARS, I KEPT TRYING TO COME ACROSS THE MYSTERIOUS RING, BUT IN VAIN...
AND THREE MORE YEARS WENT BY.

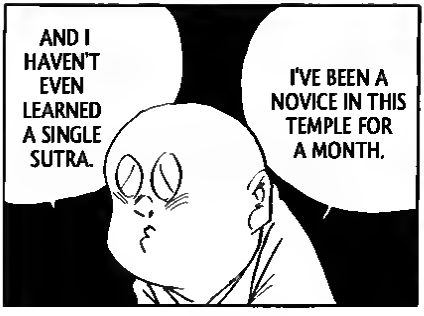
I WAS VERY LATE! I WENT BARRELING OUT OF THE HOUSE WITHOUT EATING BREAKFAST
WHEN ARE YOU PLANNING TO GET UP? IT'S ALREADY EIGHT!
IT WAS DURING THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS.
IT WAS THEN THAT I SAW THE RING AGAIN, FLOATING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE EMPTY STREET.

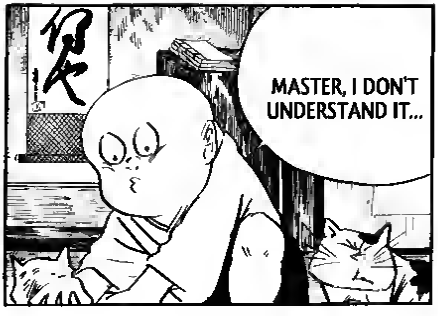

HOWEVER...
I REACHED THE CLASSROOM AND SET OUT TO DO THE FIRST EXAM, BUT...
...I THOUGHT THAT I COULDN'T FLUNK THE EXAMS. I DECIDED TO RETURN THERE AFTER I'D FINISHED THE TESTS.
AFTER THE TESTS I WENT RUNNING TO THE PLACE FROM BEFORE. BUT THERE WAS NO LONGER ANYTHING THERE.
...THE MORE I TRIED TO CONCENTRATE, THE MORE INSISTENTLY THE IMAGE OF THE RING APPEARED BEFORE ME.
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN LEFT WITH THIS DOUBT... WAS THIS INCIDENT A SIMPLE CHILDHOOD FANTASY? OR IS THE TRUTH THAT THERE EXISTS A SEPARATE WORLD, THAT ONLY CHILDREN CAN SEE?

THE LIQUEUR OF IMMORTALITY

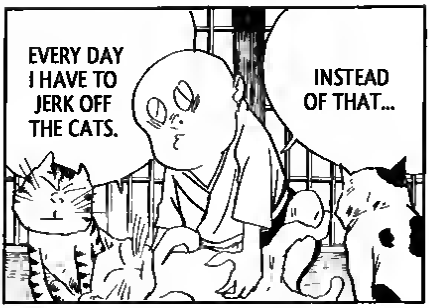
PRESENTED BY
HAPPY SCANS

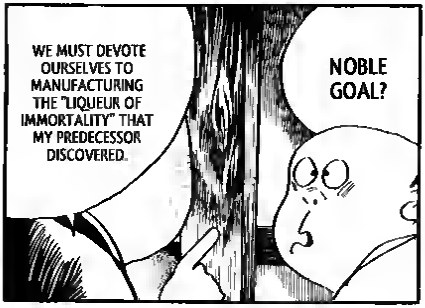

ON MOUNT NAGAO ONE WOULD FIND THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE CHOJU, WHICH MEANS "LONGEVITY," ALSO KNOWN AS "THE TEMPLE OF THE CATS." MANY OF THESE FELINES ACTUALLY LIVED THERE, BUT CURIOUSLY THEY WERE ALL MALES.

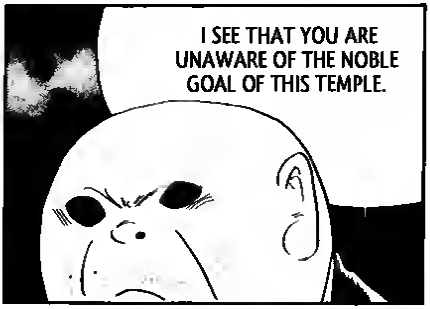

AND I HAVEN'T EVEN LEARNED A SINGLE SUTRA.
I'VE BEEN A NOVICE IN THIS TEMPLE FOR A MONTH.

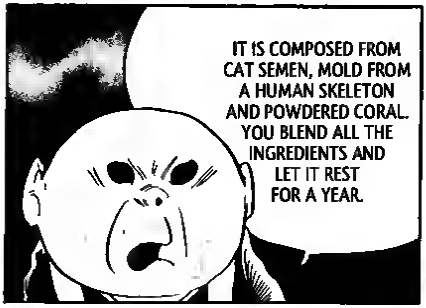

MASTER, I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT...

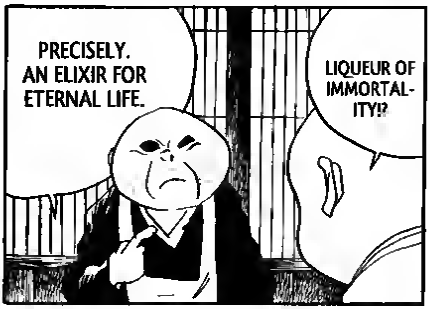
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

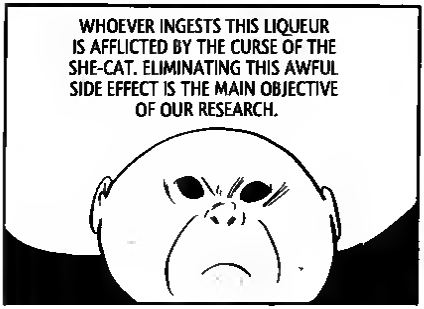

EVERY DAY I HAVE TO JERK OFF THE CATS.
INSTEAD OF THAT...

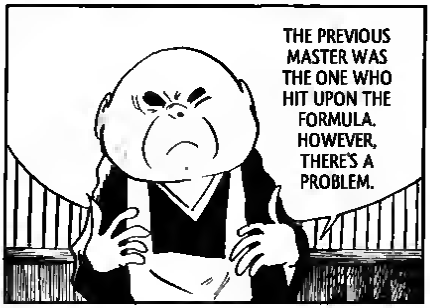

WE MUST DEVOTE OURSELVES TO MANUFACTURING THE "LIQUEUR OF IMMORTALITY" THAT MY PREDECESSOR DISCOVERED.
NOBLE GOAL?


I SEE THAT YOU ARE UNAWARE OF THE NOBLE GOAL OF THIS TEMPLE.

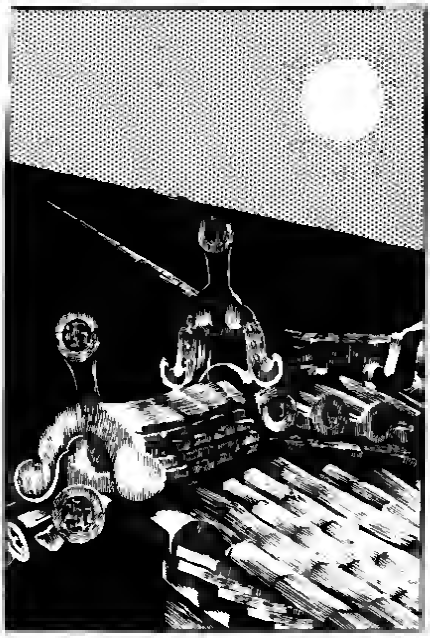

IT IS COMPOSED FROM CAT SEMEN, MOLD FROM A HUMAN SKELETON AND POWDERED CORAL. YOU BLEND ALL THE INGREDIENTS AND LET IT REST FOR A YEAR.

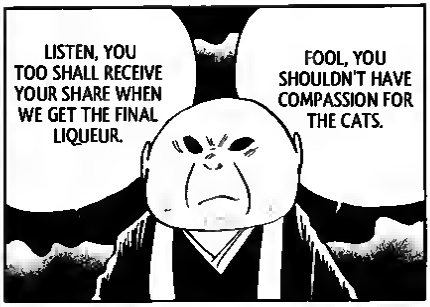

PRECISELY. AN ELIXIR FOR ETERNAL LIFE.
LIQUEUR OF IMMORTALITY!?

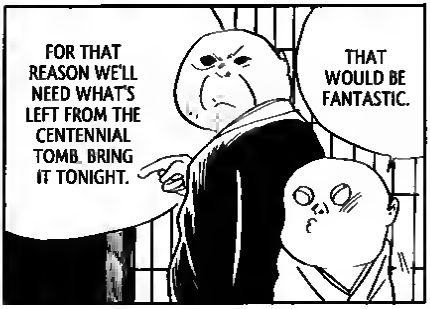

WHOEVER INGESTS THIS LIQUEUR IS AFFLICTED BY THE CURSE OF THE SHE-CAT. ELIMINATING THIS AWFUL SIDE EFFECT IS THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF OUR RESEARCH.

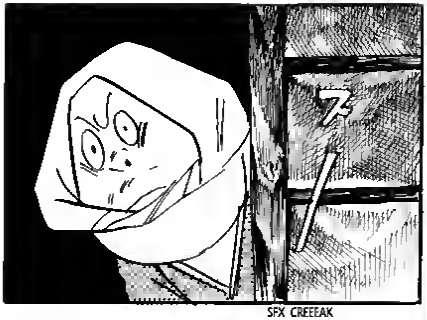

THE PREVIOUS MASTER WAS THE ONE WHO HIT UPON THE FORMULA. HOWEVER, THERE'S A PROBLEM.

HEY, LISTEN UP.
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING SO AMAZING IN THIS TEMPLE.
OOOO.
IF WE ACCOMPLISH THIS, WE WILL OBTAIN THE BEST LIQUEUR IN THE WORLD.
MY DESIRE IS TO LIVE FOREVER IN A CORNER OF THE TEMPLE WITH AN ETERNAL SMILE OF SATISFACTION.
SHOULD OUR LORD FIND OUT, HE WILL SEIZE THE ELIXIR FROM US.
YOU MUSTN'T REVEAL THIS SECRET TO ANYBODY.
WITH ALL THE SEED WE'RE TAKING FROM THE TOMCATS, I'M NOT SURPRISED THAT THE SHE-CATS WANT TO GET REVENGE.
COME ON, LET'S GO. WITH THAT MOVEMENT YOU WON'T MANAGE TO AROUSE THEM.

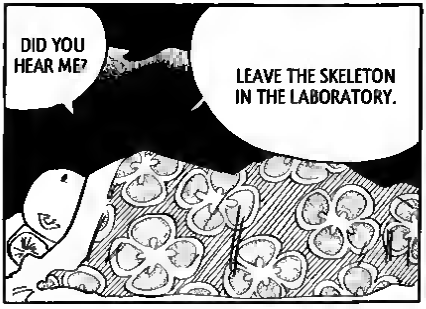






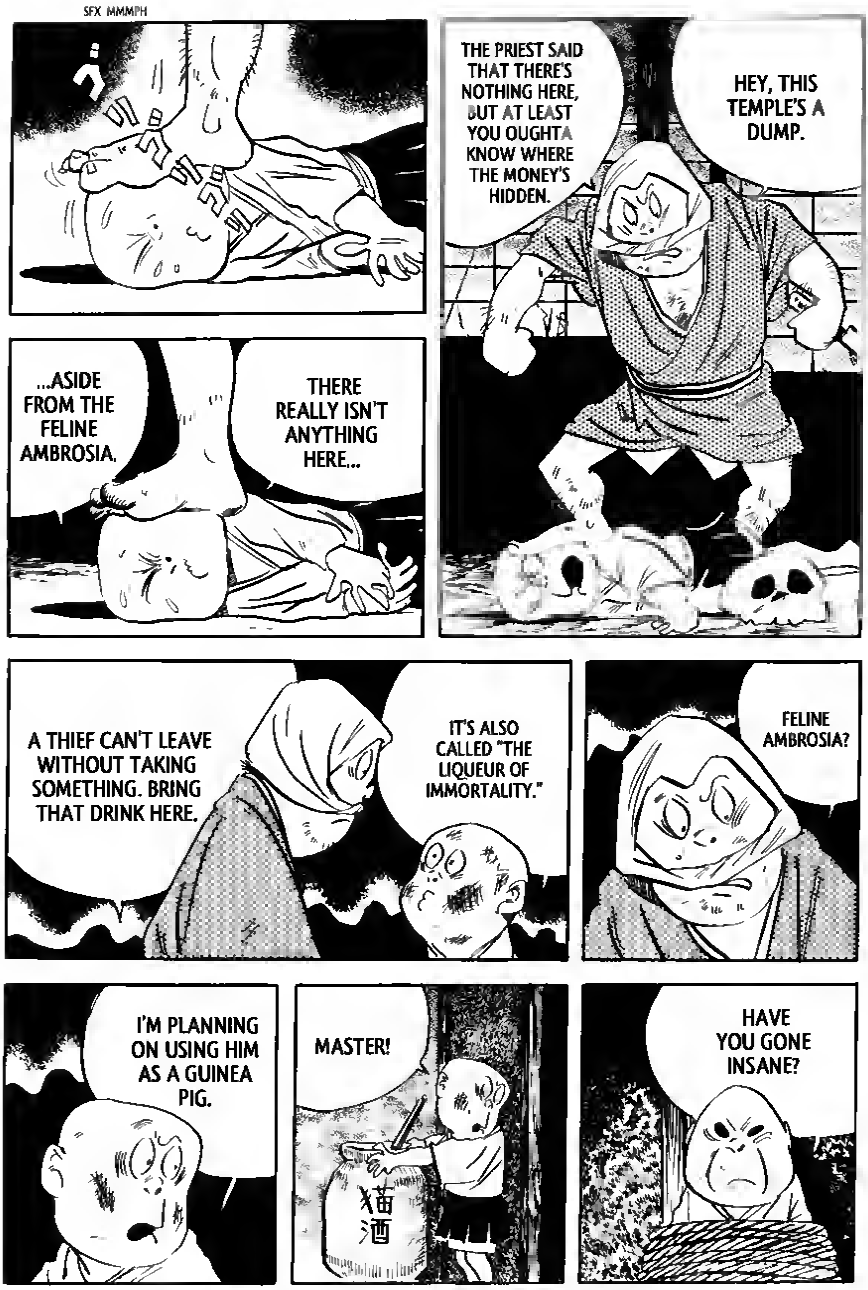


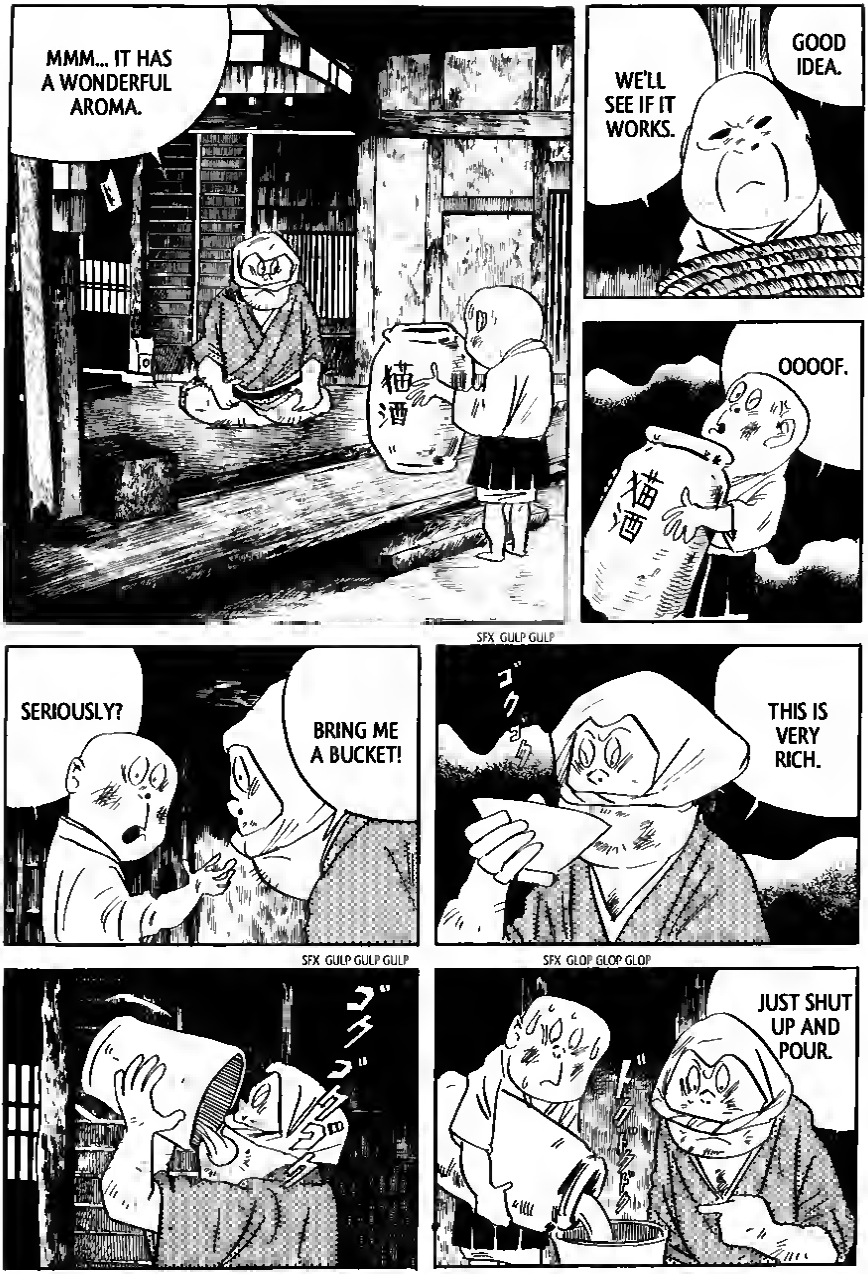
SFX CREEEAK



SFX TAP TAP TAP

DON'T KILL ME, I'M BEGGING YOU!
AAARGH!
SHUT UP, YOU IDIOT!
MMMM...
MASTER... AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS, THE BONES BECOME FILLED WITH WATER AND THEY WEIGH A TON
THIS IS EXTREMELY HARD WORK.
SFX BONK


SFX MMMPH
HEY, THIS TEMPLE'S A DUMP.
THE PRIEST SAID THAT THERE'S NOTHING HERE, BUT AT LEAST YOU OUGHTA KNOW WHERE THE MONEY'S HIDDEN.
THERE REALLY ISN'T ANYTHING HERE...
...ASIDE FROM THE FELINE AMBROSIA.
FELINE AMBROSIA?
IT'S ALSO CALLED "THE LIQUEUR OF IMMORTALITY."
A THIEF CAN'T LEAVE WITHOUT TAKING SOMETHING. BRING THAT DRINK HERE.
HAVE YOU GONE INSANE?
MASTER!
I'M PLANNING ON USING HIM AS A GUINEA PIG.


MMM... IT HAS A WONDERFUL AROMA.
猫酒
GOOD IDEA.
WE'LL SEE IF IT WORKS.
OOOOF.
猫酒
SFX GULP GULP
SERIOUSLY?
BRING ME A BUCKET!
ゴクゴク
THIS IS VERY RICH.
SFX GULP GULP GULP
SFX GLOP GLOP GLOP
ゴクゴクゴク
JUST SHUT UP AND POUR.

SFX: MEOOOOW
ニャ
I'D NEVER TASTED SUCH A GOOD LIQUEUR.
SFX: HICCUP
ウィーッ
WHO'S MEWING LIKE A CAT?
SFX: GNOAAAR
SFX: AAAAH!
ガ
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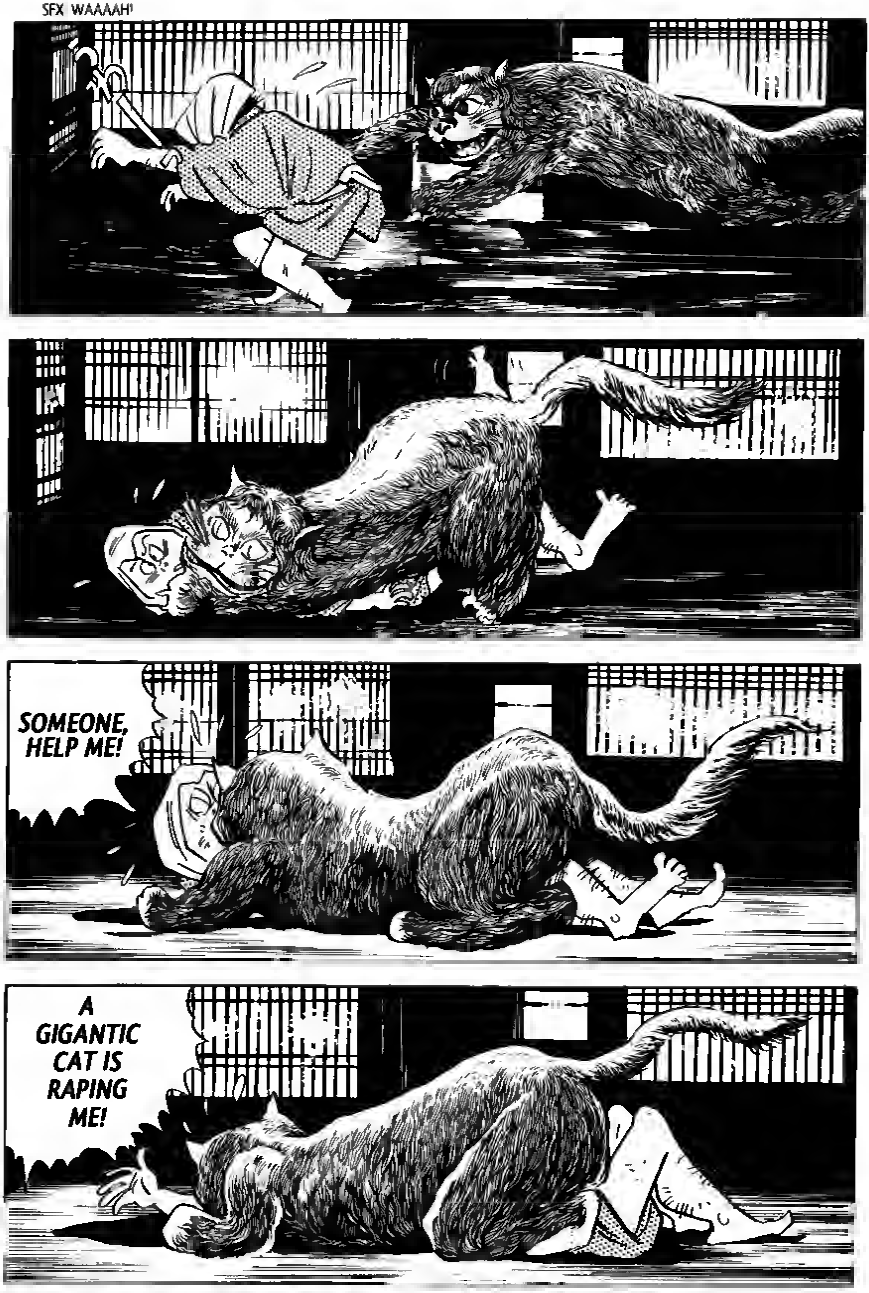
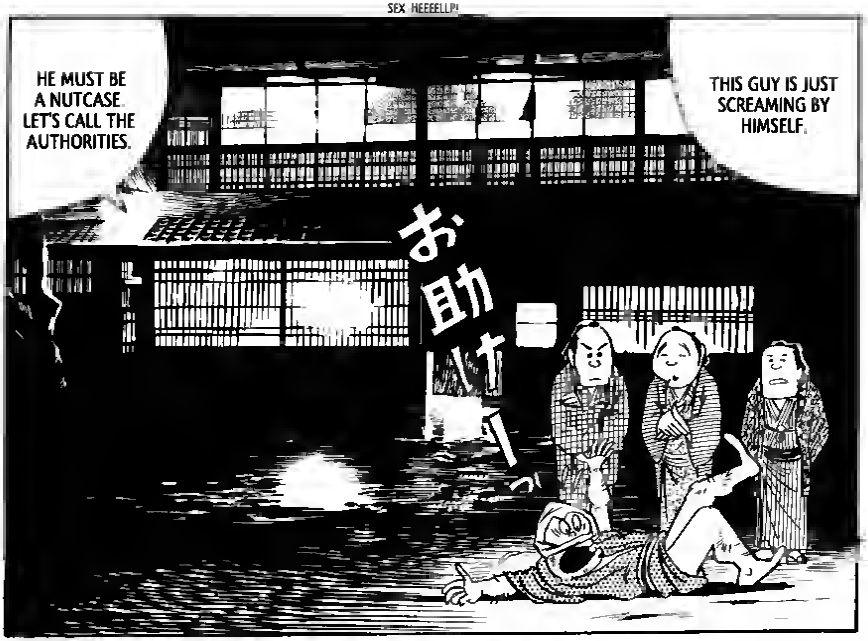
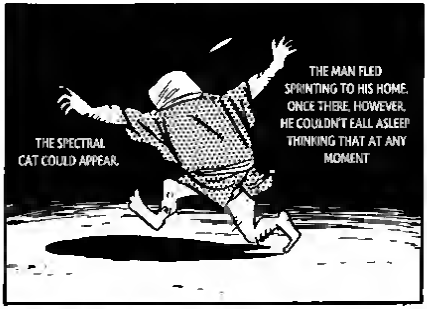
あわや


SFX WAAAAH!
SOMEONE, HELP ME!
A GIGANTIC CAT IS RAPING ME!

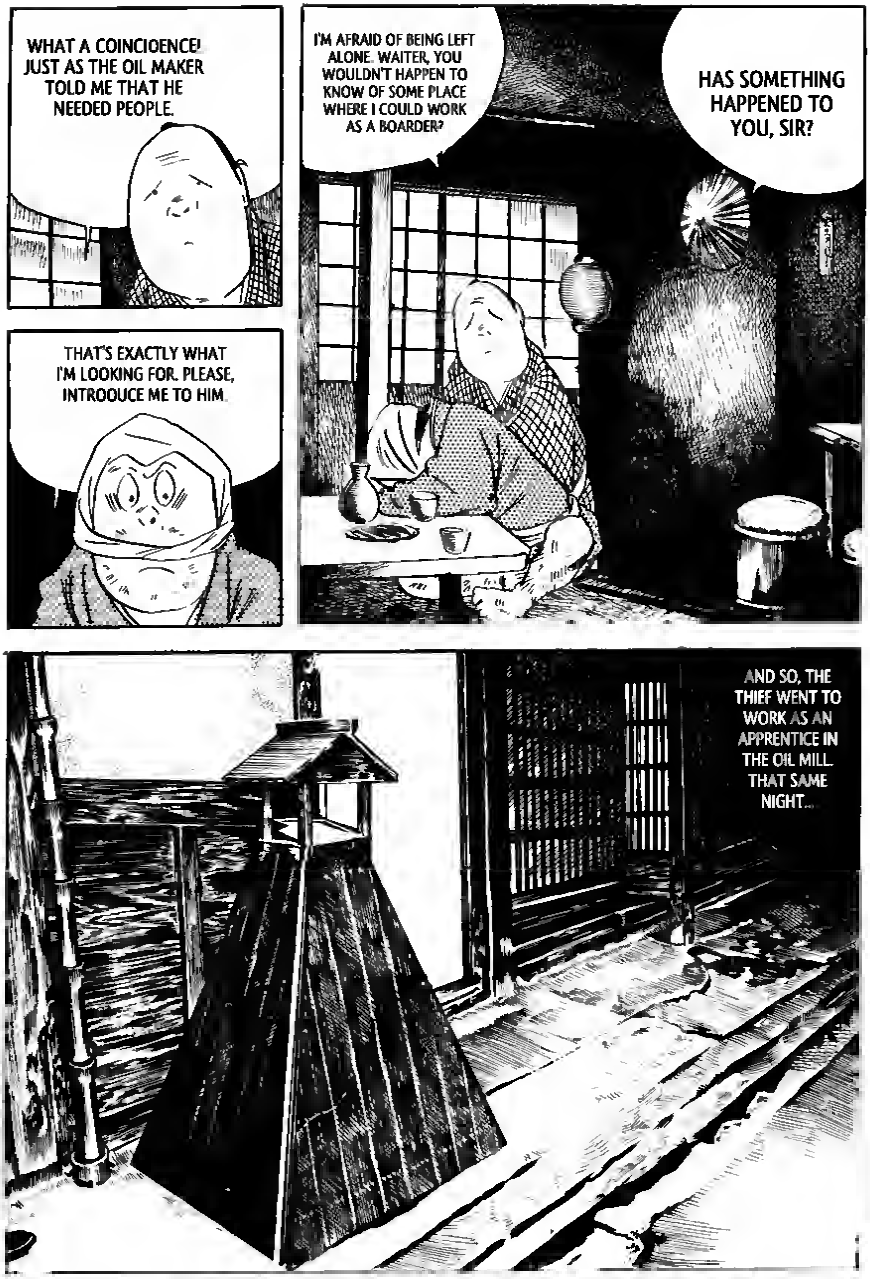

HE MUST BE A NUTCASE. LET'S CALL THE AUTHORITIES.
THIS GUY IS JUST SCREAMING BY HIMSELF.
お助けー


THE SPECTRAL CAT COULD APPEAR.
THE MAN FLED SPRINTING TO HIS HOME. ONCE THERE, HOWEVER, HE COULDN'T EALL ASLEEP THINKING THAT AT ANY MOMENT

DON'T EVEN THINK OF THAT!

THE NEXT DAY

SFX: GROAAAR
ゴーギャ
HE AGAIN FELL VICTIM TO THE CAT'S HARASSMENT.
SFX: PANT PANT PANT
I CAN'T CONTINUE LIVING IN THIS HOUSE.


WHAT A COINCIDENCE! JUST AS THE OIL MAKER TOLD ME THAT HE NEEDED PEOPLE.
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR. PLEASE, INTROOUCE ME TO HIM.
I'M AFRAID OF BEING LEFT ALONE. WAITER, YOU WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO KNOW OF SOME PLACE WHERE I COULD WORK AS A BOARDER?
HAS SOMETHING HAPPENED TO YOU, SIR?
AND SO, THE THIEF WENT TO WORK AS AN APPRENTICE IN THE OIL MILL. THAT SAME NIGHT...

I HAVE TO SEIZE THIS CHANCE TO ESCAPE.
A STRANGE NOISE DISRUPTED HIS SLEEP. IT WAS THE SPECTRAL CAT, LICKING OIL!
SFX: SLURP SLURP SLURP
ペタペタペタ
SFX: GROAAAR
ガ

SFX. KYAAA!
AN ARSONIST!
TAKE THIS!
HOLY CRAP! THIS HAS GOTTEN OUT OF HAND.
FIIIIRE! A MASSIVE BLAZE!
カーン カーン カーン
SFX. CLANG CLANG CLANG

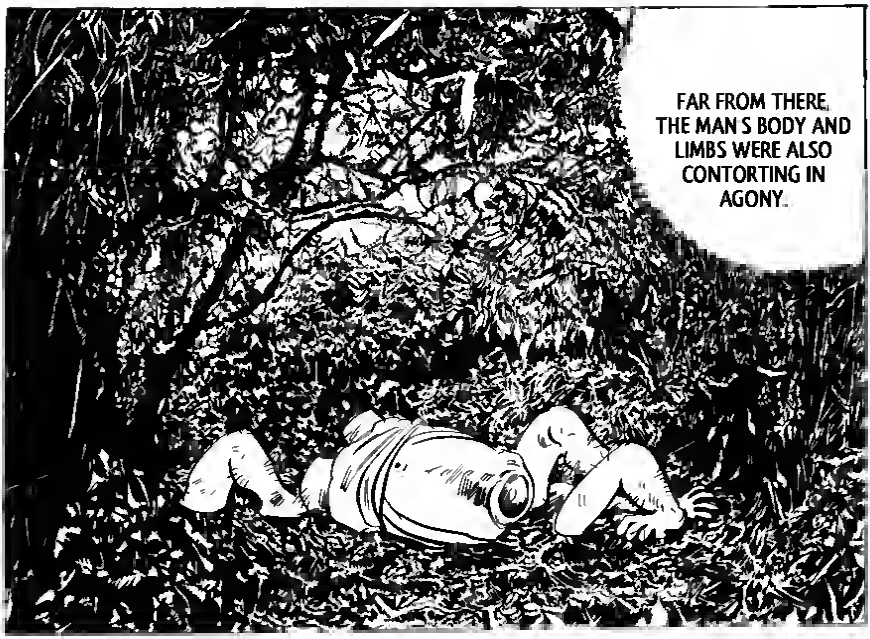
SFX SPLASH
I'D RATHER TAKE MY OWN LIFE NOW!
ARSON IS A CAPITAL OFFENSE THAT'S PUNISHED WITH CRUCIFIXION
SFX. HRMMM
SFX. GLUB GLUB
SFX BLURP
HEY! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
SFX PLASH PLASH
I'LL TRY USING THIS.
I CAN'T MANAGE TO DROWN MYSELF... I SUFFER BUT I DON'T DIE!
HOW STRANGE...

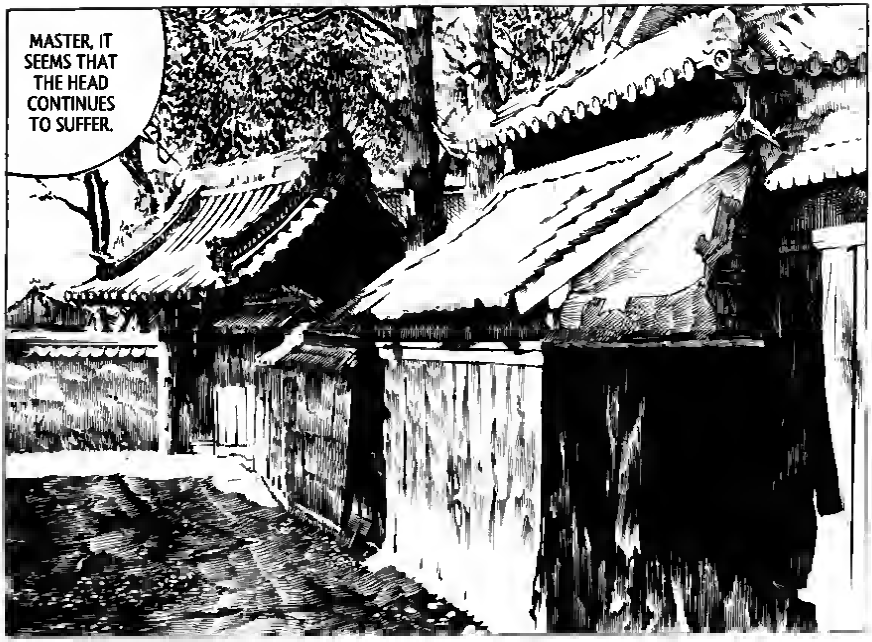
SFX UUUGH
SFX UGH
SFX SO PAINFUL!
DON'T RESIST!
IT'S THE ARSONIST! HEY, YOU!
WHAT'S UP WITH THAT MAN?
SFX UGH

SFX: RAAH, RAAH!
THE ONLY THING THEY DID WAS HEIGHTEN HIS PAIN AND SUFFERING.
BUT, NO MATTER HOW OFTEN THEY JABBED HIM WITH THEIR SPEARS, HE WOULDN'T DIE.
AFTER BEING DRAGGED THROUGH THE STREETS, THE CULPRIT WAS EXECUTED UPON A CRUCIFIX.
HOW PECULIAR.
SFX: HLOP
HOWEVER, THE HEAD, LIMBS AND TORSO WERE STILL ALIVE, EACH GOING IN SEPARATE WAYS.
CUT OFF HIS HEAD, ARMS AND LEGS.
YES, SIR.

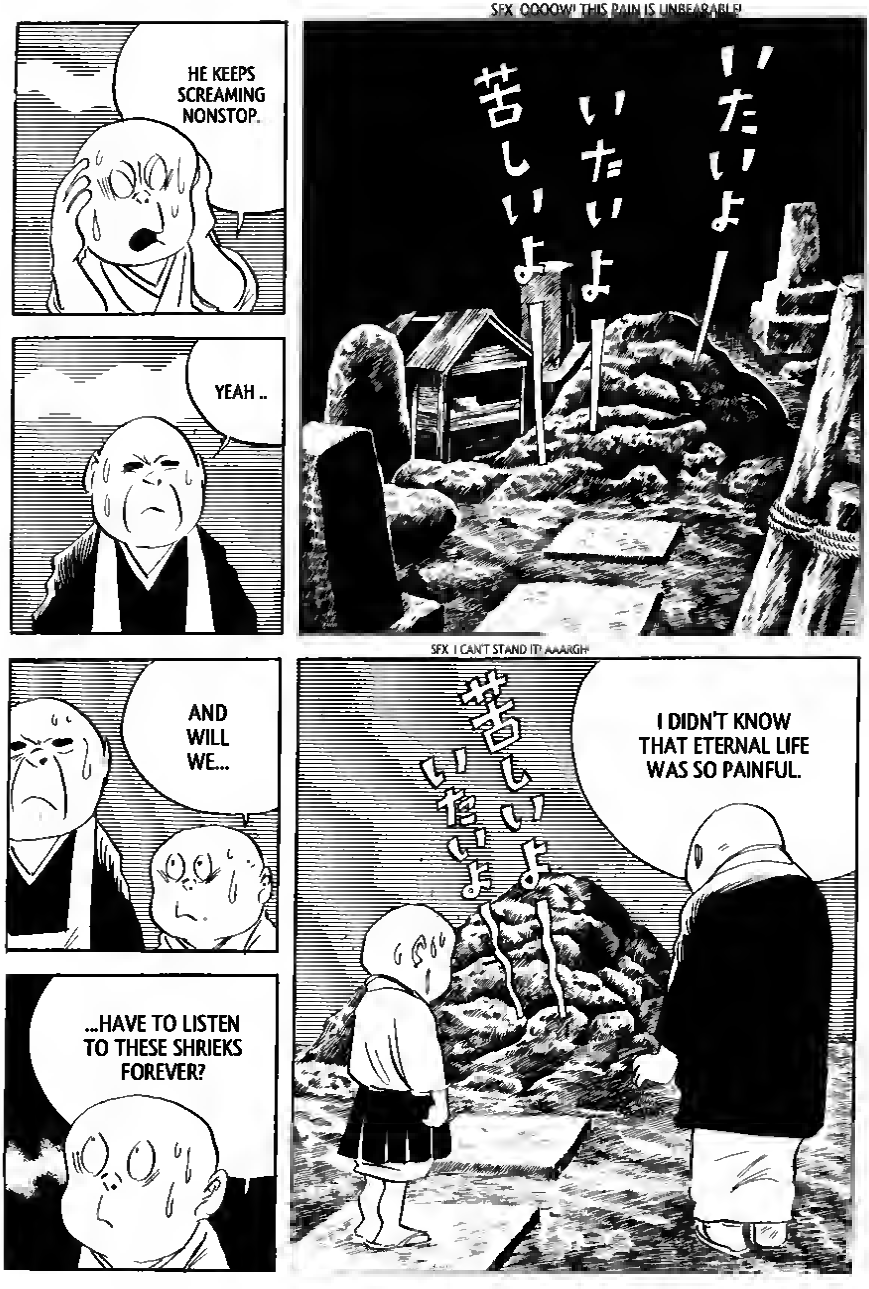
SFX. OOMPHGRRR
AAUUGH! AGAIN WITH THE CAT!
TO TOP IT OFF...
THE PAIN GREW SHARPER.
AT THAT EXACT INSTANT, THE HEAD FLEW OFF THROUGH THE AIR.

UMM...
LOOK AT THE STATE I'M IN. YOUR POTION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS.
THE HEAD WAS SENT TO THE TEMPLE SO THAT IT WOULDN'T REVEAL THE SECRET OF THE LIQUEUR.
WHY THE HELL IS A GIGANTIC CAT STALKING ME?
OOOH! GOD, WHAT A PAIN!
THAT'S WHY IT ATTACKS YOU EVERY NIGHT.
BECAUSE THE HEAD PRIEST HAS SPENT 50 YEARS EXTRACTING THE SEED OF TOMCATS.
THE DISSATISFACTION OF THE SHE-CATS HAS MATERIALIZED AS THAT MONSTER THAT TRIES TO RECOVER THE SEMEN YOU DRANK.


FAR FROM THERE, THE MAN'S BODY AND LIMBS WERE ALSO CONTORTING IN AGONY.

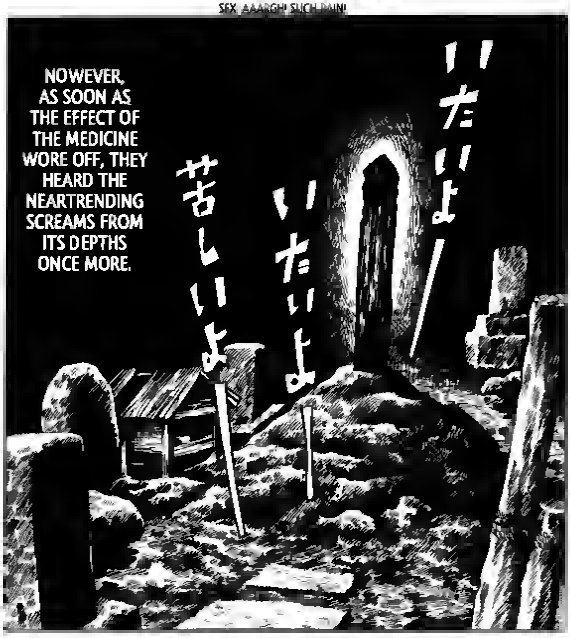

MASTER, IT SEEMS THAT THE HEAD CONTINUES TO SUFFER.

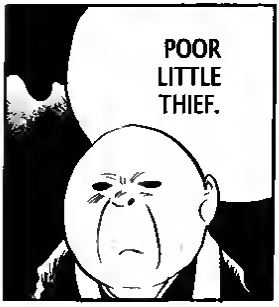
HE'LL HAVE TO CONTINUE LIVING FOR ALL ETERNITY.
NATURALLY. IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO DIE.
I'LL HAVE TO KEEP SUFFERING FOREVER?
WHAT!?
IF YOU THINK THAT HIS PAIN WILL BE SOOTHED BELOW THE GROUND. GO AHEAD.
I'M MOVED TO PITY.
WHAT TORTURE! SUCH AGONY!
AND IF WE BURY HIM?

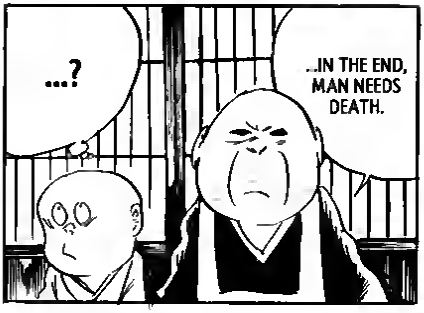

HE KEEPS SCREAMING NONSTOP.
YEAH ..
SFX OOOOW! THIS PAIN IS UNBEARABLE!
いたいよ
いたいよ
苦しいよ
AND WILL WE...
...HAVE TO LISTEN TO THESE SHRIEKS FOREVER?
SFX I CAN'T STAND IT! AAARGH!
苦しいよ
いたいよ
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT ETERNAL LIFE WAS SO PAINFUL.

THE PRIEST GATHERED THE REST OF THE BODY AND DEDICATED NUMEROUS PRAYERS FOR HIM. BUT THERE WAS NO EFFECT.
THE DIFFERENT PARTS REMAINED ALIVE AND JUMPED ABOUT IN ANGUISH.
AFTER DAUBING THEM WITH A SOOTHING OINTMENT, THE MONK BURIED ALL THE PARTS TOGETHER IN ONE GRAVE.

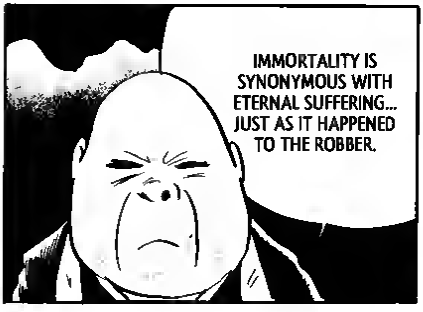
AND THEY NEVER CEASED.

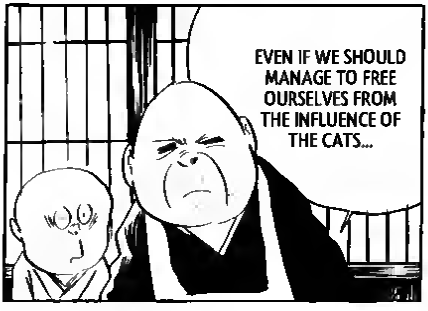

NOWEVER, AS SOON AS THE EFFECT OF THE MEDICINE WORE OFF, THEY HEARD THE NEARTRENDING SCREAMS FROM ITS DEPTHS ONCE MORE.
いたいよ
いたいよ
苦しいよ


POOR LITTLE THIEF.


....?
...IN THE END, MAN NEEDS DEATH.

THE CONCLUSION IS THAT...
THANKS TO HIM WE'VE PERFORMED AN EXPERIMENT OF GREAT VALUE.

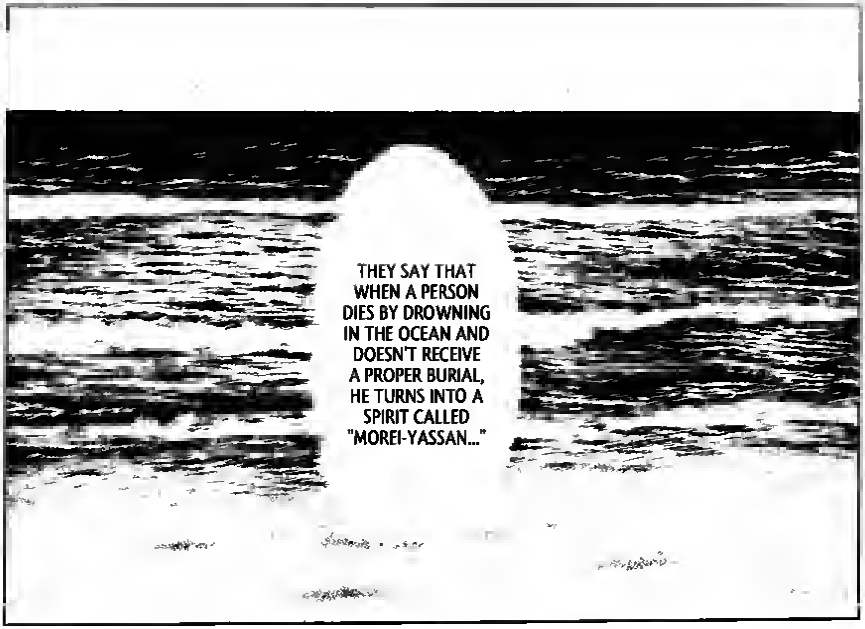

IMMORTALITY IS SYNONYMOUS WITH ETERNAL SUFFERING... JUST AS IT HAPPENED TO THE ROBBER.

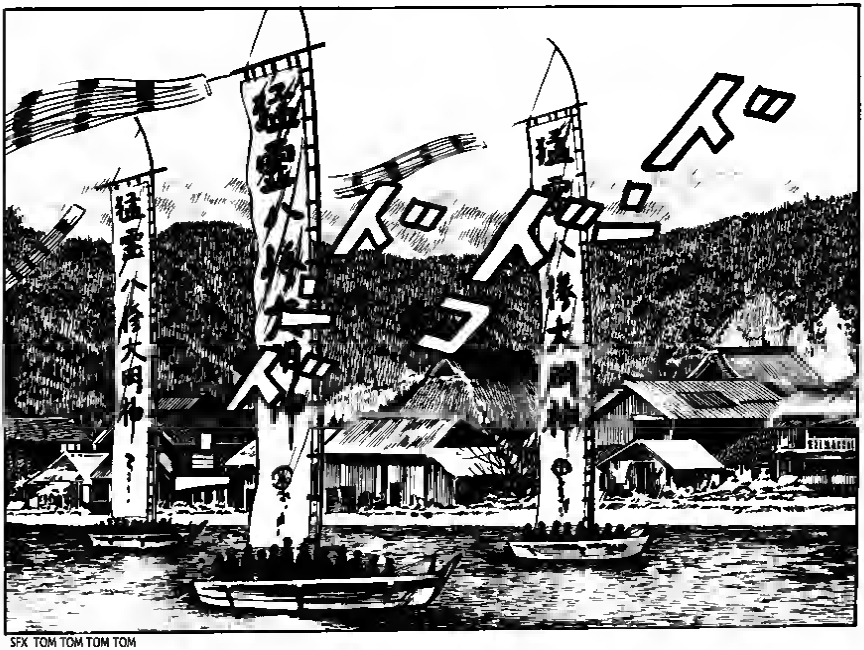

EVEN IF WE SHOULD MANAGE TO FREE OURSELVES FROM THE INFLUENCE OF THE CATS...

LET'S ASSUME THAT THE WORLD DOESN'T SUIT OUR DESIRES.
PERHAPS DEATH IS THE BEST GIFT THE GODS CAN GIVE US.
Y... YOU'RE ABANDONING YOUR RESEARCH?
THAT'S CORRECT.
我思
IN SHORT, THE BEST WAY OF LIVING IS THE WAY NATURE PROVIDES US.
IT'S A USELESS ENDEAVOR.

THE SWIRLS OF THE SEA

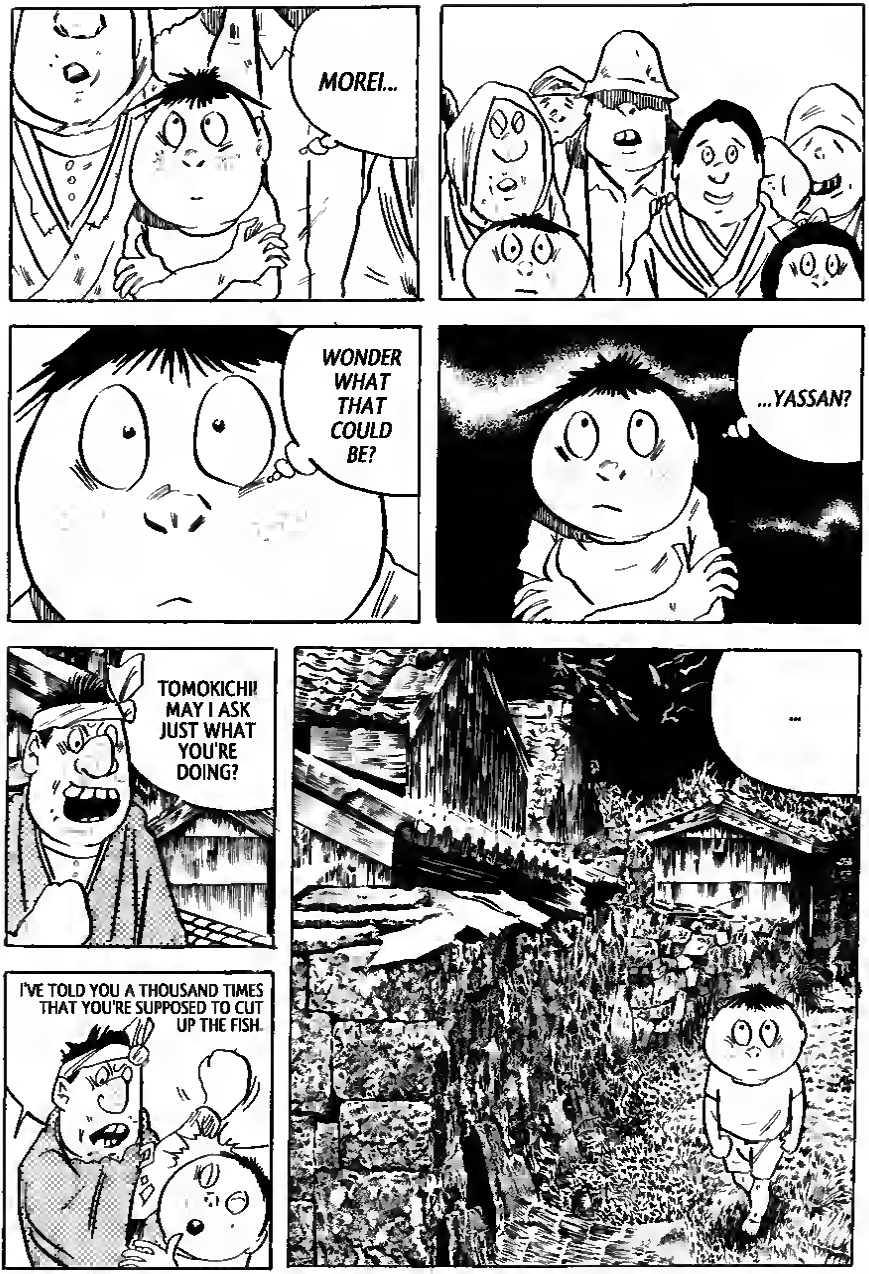
Presented by
Happy scans


THEY SAY THAT WHEN A PERSON DIES BY DROWNING IN THE OCEAN AND DOESN'T RECEIVE A PROPER BURIAL, HE TURNS INTO A SPIRIT CALLED "MOREI-YASSAN..."



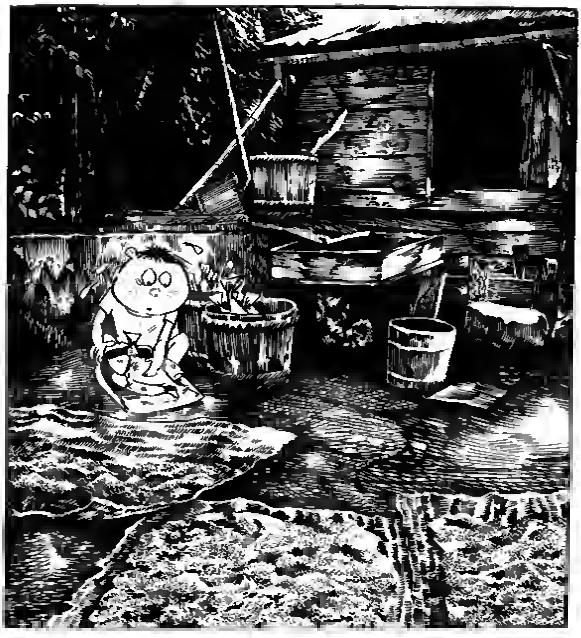
SFX TOM TOM TOM TOM

SIGNS GREAT GODS MOREI-FASSAN


MORE!..
WONDER WHAT THAT COULD BE?
...YASSAN?
TOMOKICHI! MAY I ASK JUST WHAT YOU'RE DOING?
I'VE TOLD YOU A THOUSAND TIMES THAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO CUT UP THE FISH.
...

SFX. WHOP

YOU'RE NOT GOING HUNGRY THANKS TO THE FACT THAT I TOOK YOU IN WHEN YOU WERE ORPHANED DON'T YOU FORGET IT!
SORRY.



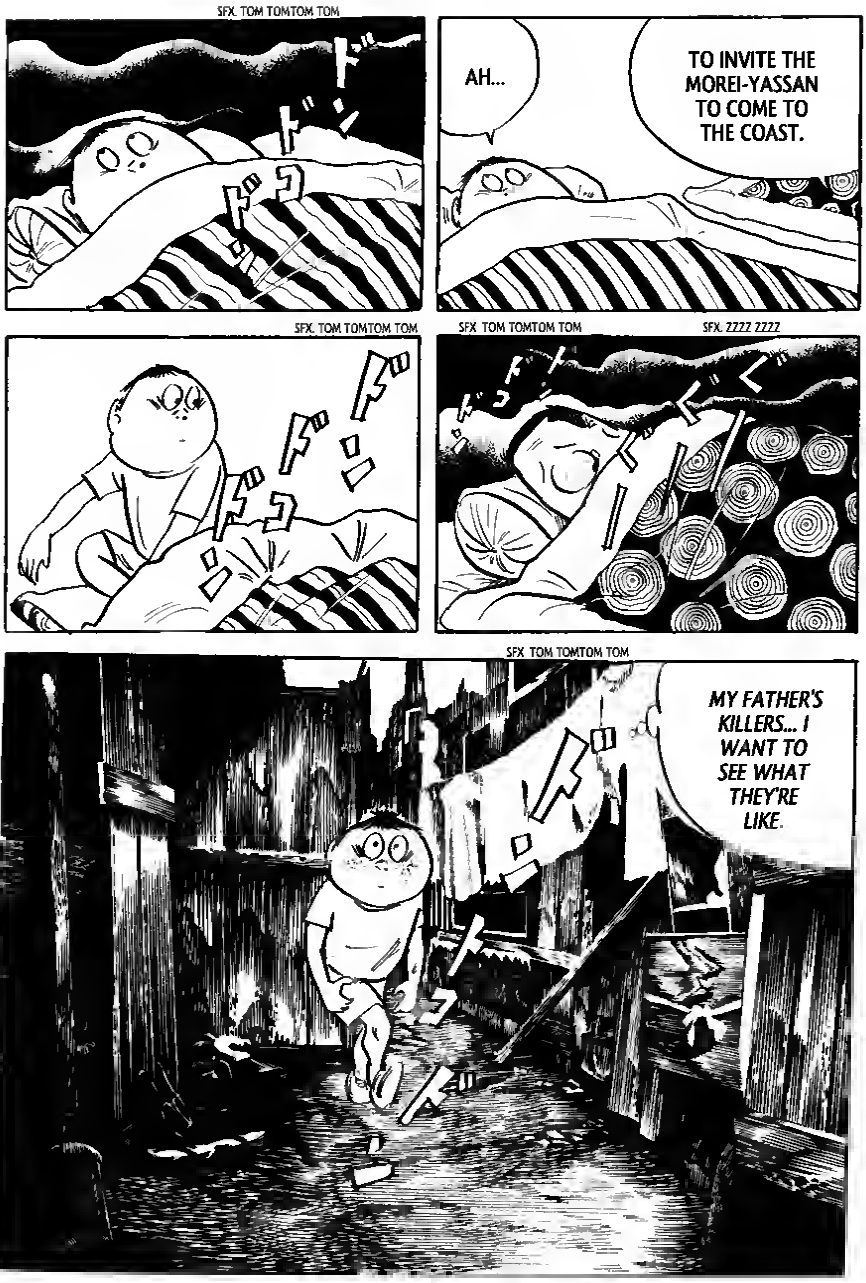
EVEN DURING FESTIVALS, YOU CAN'T WASTE TIME PLAYING LIKE THE OTHER CHILDREN.

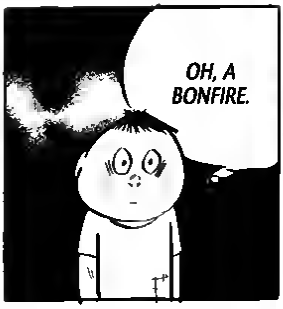
OKAY.
YOU HAVE TO WORK HARD TO EARN YOUR BREAD.

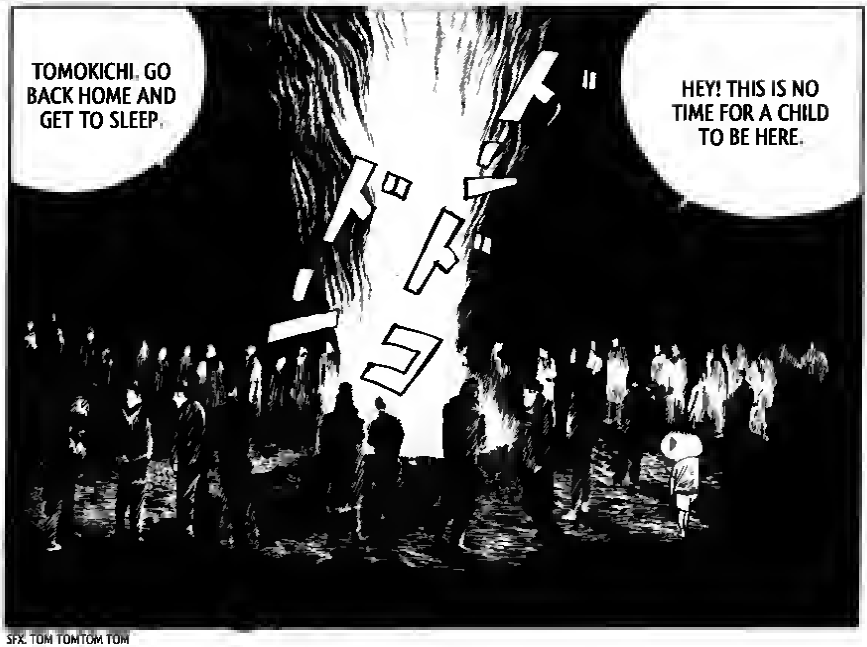
UNCLE.
SFX. TOM TOMTOM TOM
WHAT DOES MOREI-YASSAN MEAN?
WHAT'S UP? YOU'RE STILL AWAKE?
THEN THEY'RE GODS?
THEY'RE THE DEITIES OF THE VILLAGE SHRINE.
THEY COME OUT AFTERWARDS IN SEARCH OF THEIR FORMER COMPANIONS.
...THEY TURN INTO BEINGS CALLED MOREI-YASSAN
SINCE ANCIENT TIMES, IN THIS REGION THEY'VE SAID THAT WHEN FISHERMEN DROWN TO DEATH...
MORE OR LESS...

AH... THEN THEY'RE YOKAI.
THEY SURROUND THE BOATS OUT FISHING AND SHOUT: "GIVE ME A LADLE." WHEN THEY GET THE LADLE, THEY BEGIN POURING SEAWATER INTO THE BOAT UNTIL IT SINKS.
YOUR FATHER WAS PROBABLY ONE OF THEIR VICTIMS AS WELL.
THAT'S WHY WE CELEBRATE THIS FESTIVITY EVERY YEAR, FOR THE PURPOSE OF PLACATING THE MOREI-YASSAN.
SOME-THING LIKE THAT.
DADDY...
AND WHY DO THEY BEAT A DRUM THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT OF THE FESTIVAL?
SFX TOM TOMTOM TOM

*YOKAI SUPERNATURAL BEINGS FROM JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY, THEY INCLUDE SPIRITS AND MONSTERS.


SFX. TOM TOMTOM TOM
AH...
TO INVITE THE MOREI-YASSAN TO COME TO THE COAST.
SFX. TOM TOMTOM TOM
SFX. TOM TOMTOM TOM
SFX. ZZZZ ZZZZ
SFX. TOM TOMTOM TOM
MY FATHER'S KILLERS... I WANT TO SEE WHAT THEY'RE LIKE.




TOMOKICHI, GO BACK HOME AND GET TO SLEEP.
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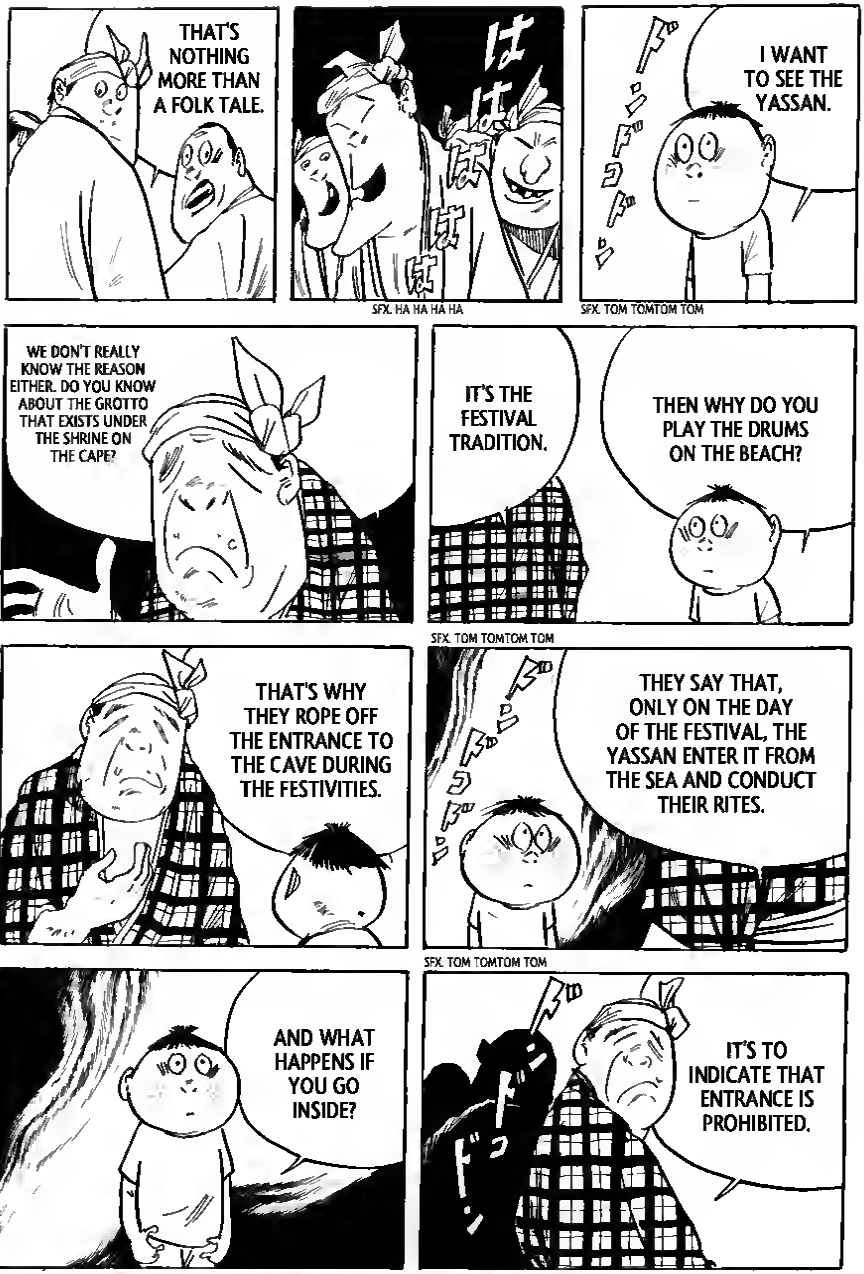
THAT'S NOTHING MORE THAN A FOLK TALE.
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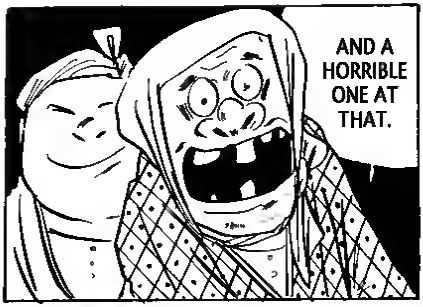
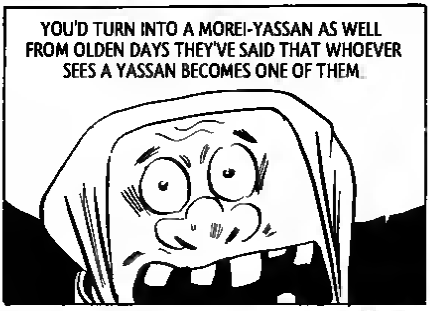
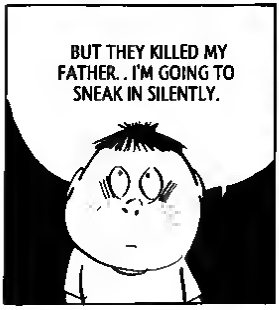
はは
SFX. HA HA HA HA
I WANT TO SEE THE YASSAN.
SFX. TOM TOMTOM TOM
WE DON'T REALLY KNOW THE REASON EITHER. DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE GROTTO THAT EXISTS UNDER THE SHRINE ON THE CAPE?
IT'S THE FESTIVAL TRADITION.
THEN WHY DO YOU PLAY THE DRUMS ON THE BEACH?
SFX. TOM TOMTOM TOM
THAT'S WHY THEY ROPE OFF THE ENTRANCE TO THE CAVE DURING THE FESTIVITIES.
THEY SAY THAT, ONLY ON THE DAY OF THE FESTIVAL, THE YASSAN ENTER IT FROM THE SEA AND CONDUCT THEIR RITES.
SFX. TOM TOMTOM TOM
AND WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU GO INSIDE?
IT'S TO INDICATE THAT ENTRANCE IS PROHIBITED.

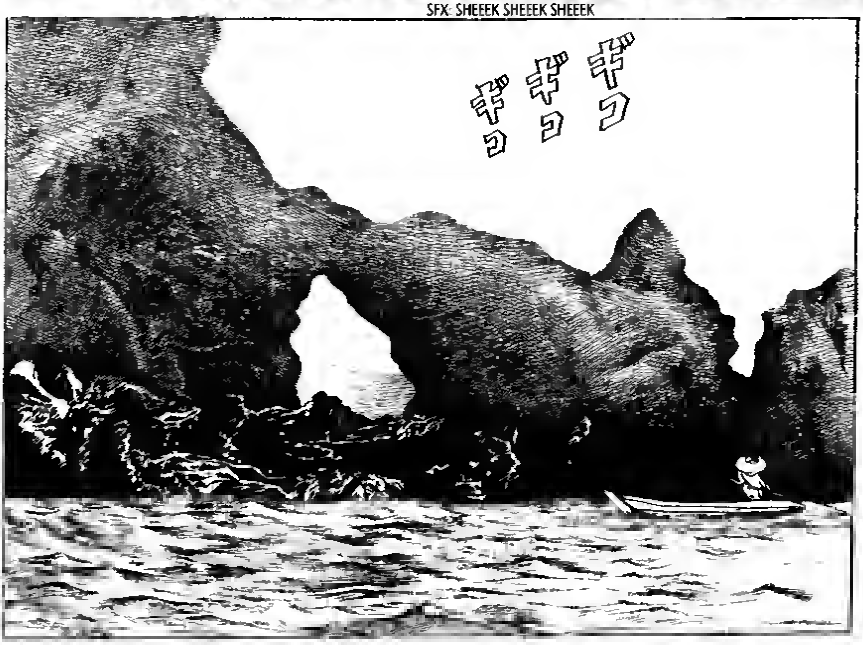




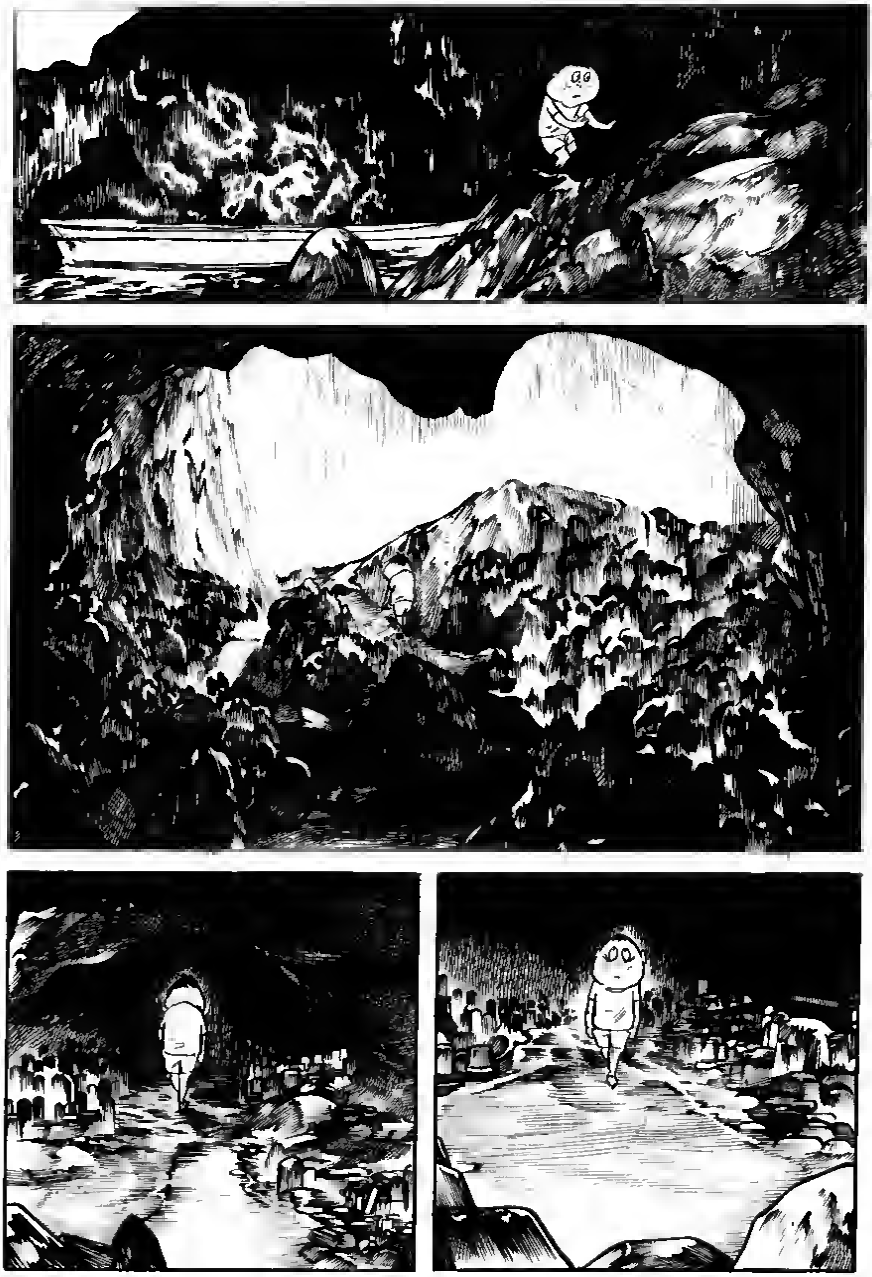
SFX TOM TOMTOM TOM

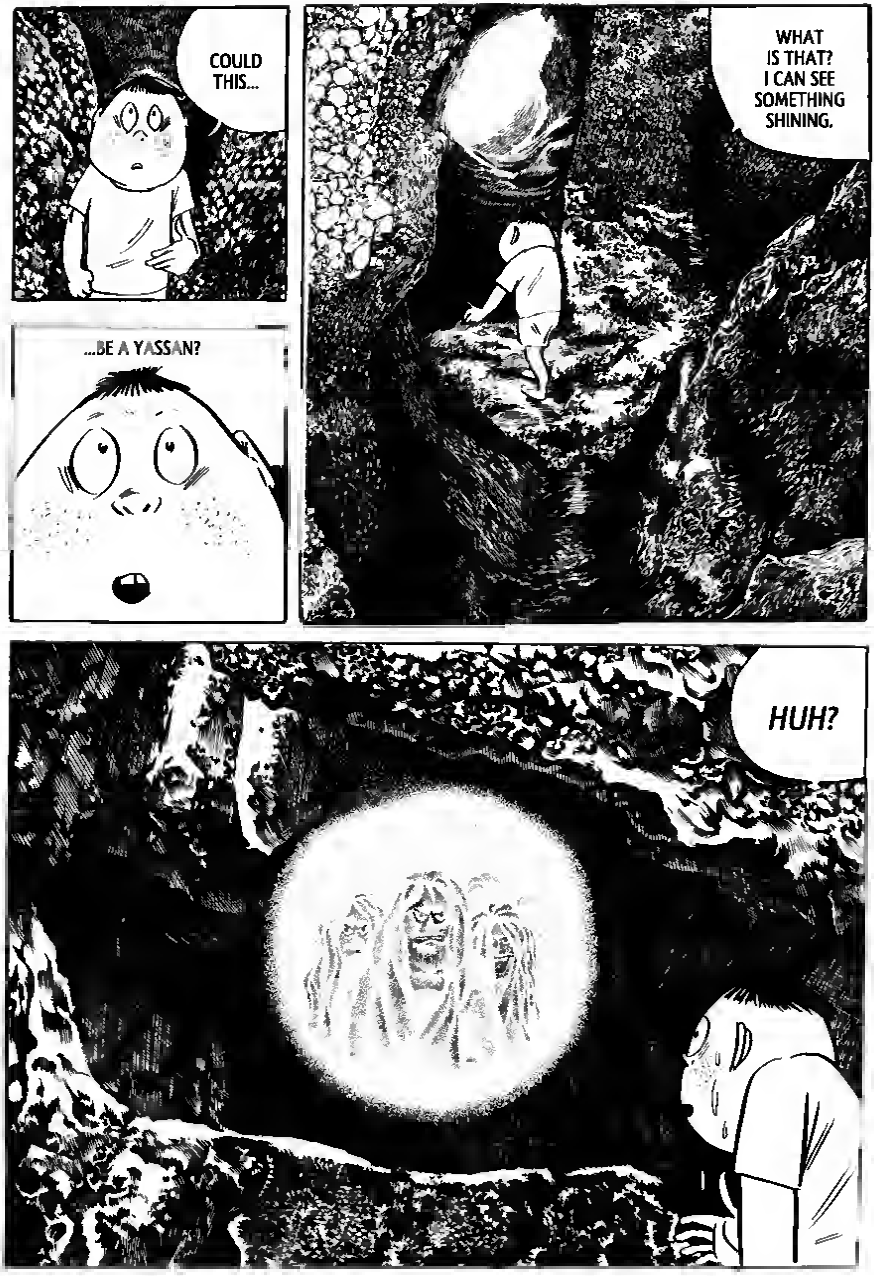


SFX: SHEEEK SHEEEK SHEEEK

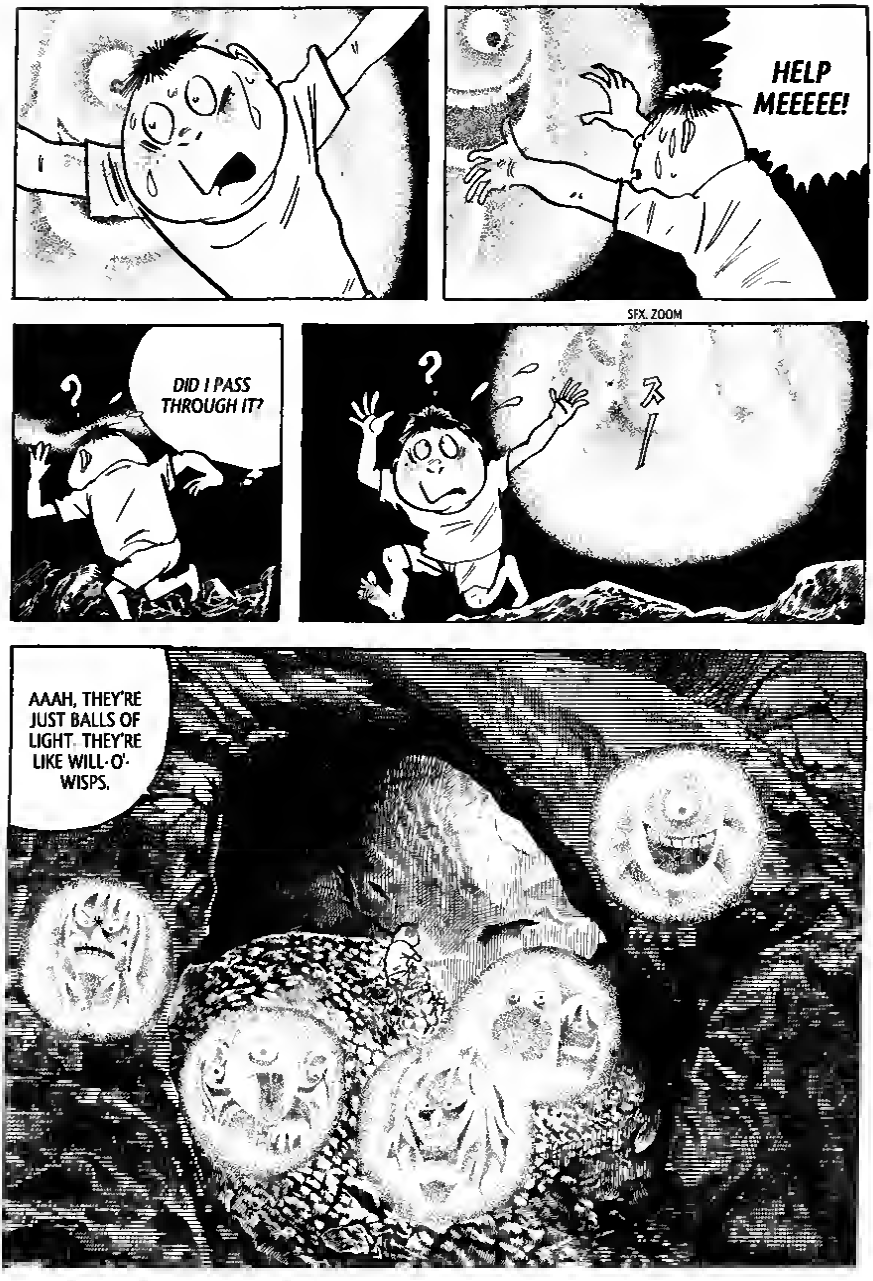


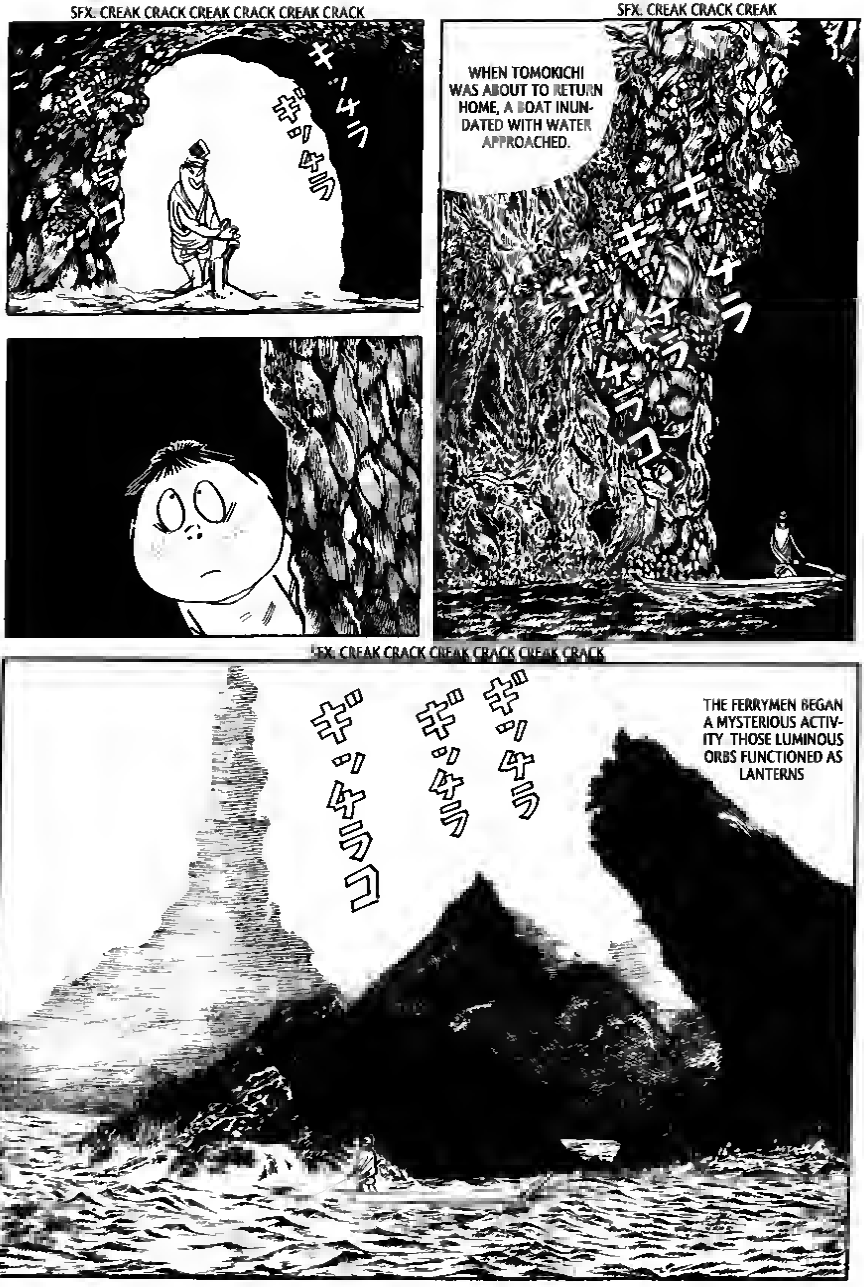
IT'S MORE SPACIOUS INSIDE THAN I EXPECTED.




COULD THIS...
...BE A YASSAN?
WHAT IS THAT? I CAN SEE SOMETHING SHINING.
HUH?

TOMOKICHI WAS SURROUNDED BY A SLEW OF GLOWING ORBS, INSIDE OF WHICH ONE COULD SEE BIZARRE CREATURES.


HELP MEEEEE!
SFX: ZOOM
スー
DID I PASS THROUGH IT?
AAAH, THEY'RE JUST BALLS OF LIGHT. THEY'RE LIKE WILL-O'-WISPS.


SFX: CREAK CRACK CREAK CRACK CREAK CRACK
キ゛ケラ
キ゛ケラ
キ゛ケラコ
SFX: CREAK CRACK CREAK
WHEN TOMOKICHI WAS ABOUT TO RETURN HOME, A BOAT INUNDATED WITH WATER APPROACHED.
キ゛ケラ
キ゛ケラ
キ゛ケラ
キ゛ケラコ
SFX: CREAK CRACK CREAK CRACK CREAK CRACK
キ゛ケラ
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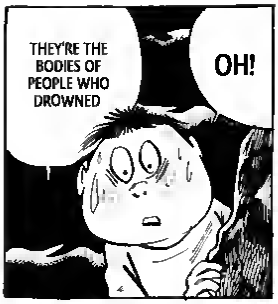
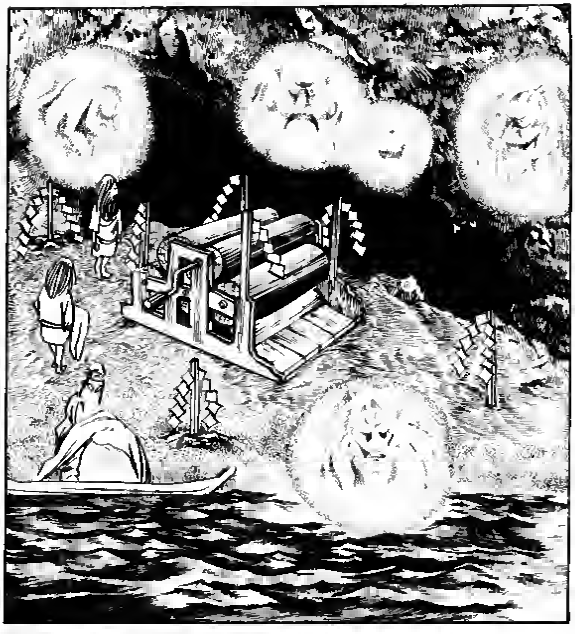
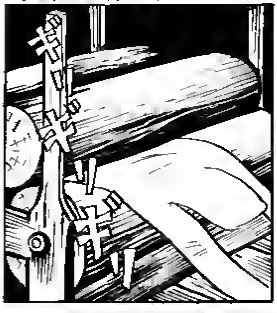
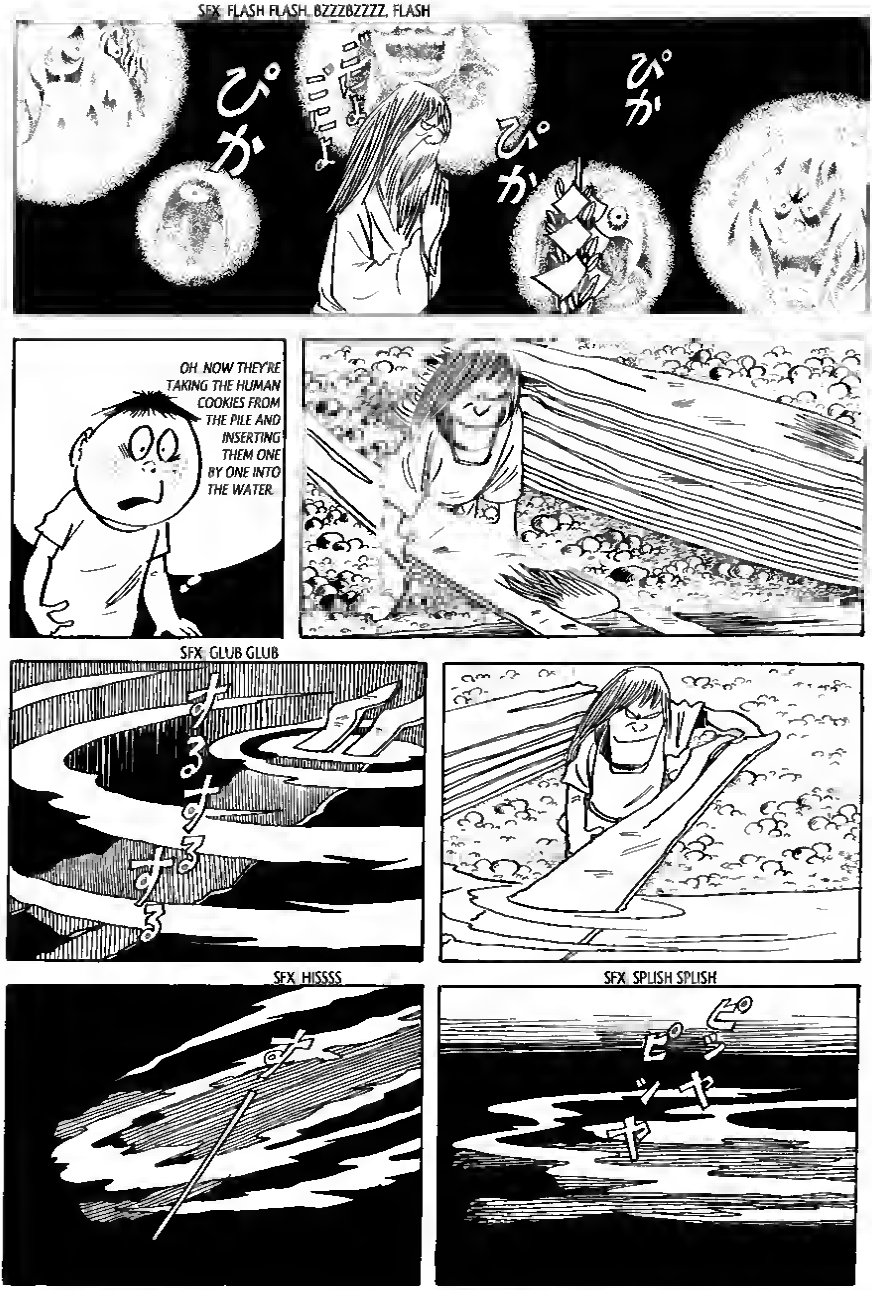
THE FERRYMEN BEGAN A MYSTERIOUS ACTIVITY. THOSE LUMINOUS ORBS FUNCTIONED AS LANTERNS



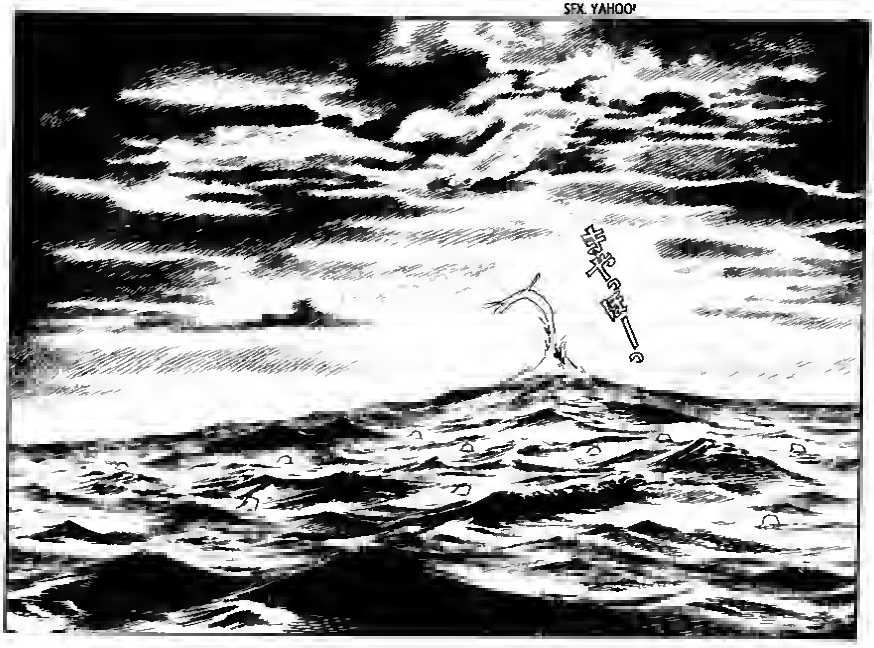


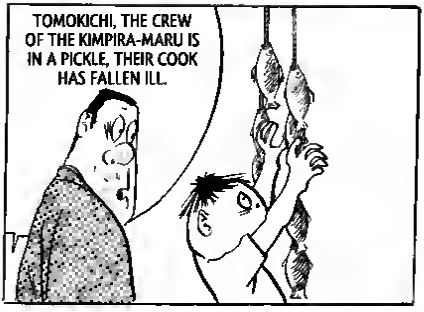
SFX CREEEEAK CREEAK

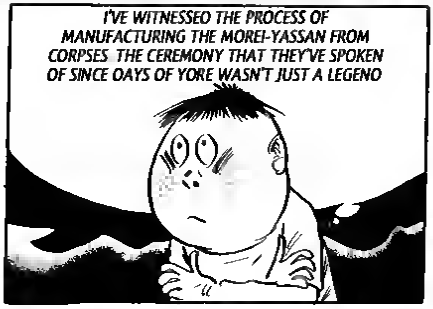


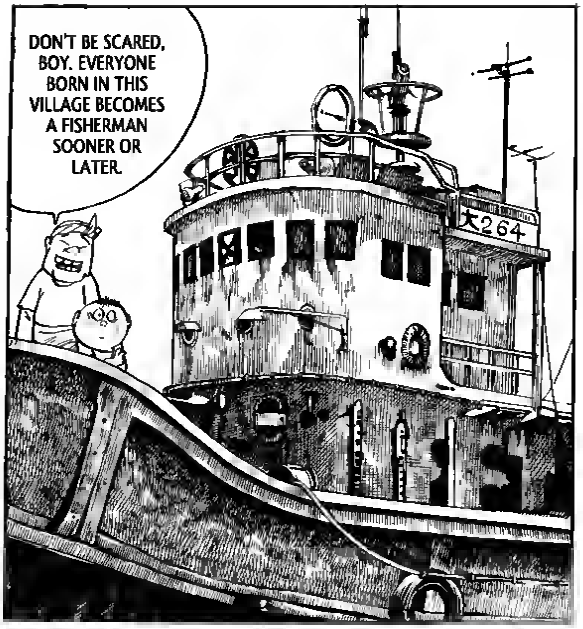

SFX: FLASH FLASH. BZZZBZZZZ. FLASH
ぴか
ニヒヒヒヒ
ぴか
ぴか
OH. NOW THEY'RE TAKING THE HUMAN COOKIES FROM THE PILE AND INSERTING THEM ONE BY ONE INTO THE WATER.
SFX: GLUB GLUB
SFX: HISSSS
SFX: SPLISH SPLISH

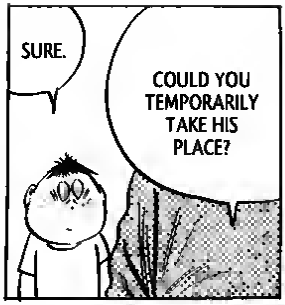
EACH OF THE COOKIES TURNED INTO A MOREI YASSAN AND FADED AWAY INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE WATER.


SFX. YAHOO!

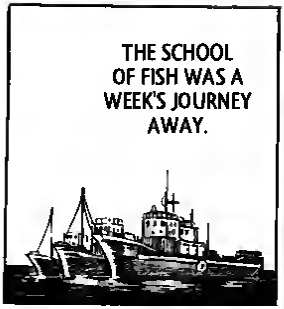

TOMOKICHI, THE CREW OF THE KIMPIRA-MARU IS IN A PICKLE, THEIR COOK HAS FALLEN ILL.

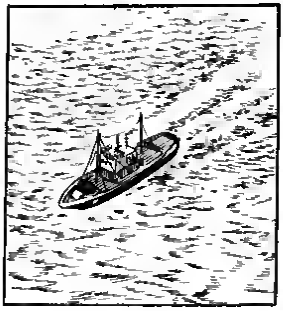

I'VE WITNESSED THE PROCESS OF MANUFACTURING THE MOREI-YASSAN FROM CORPSES. THE CEREMONY THAT THEY'VE SPOKEN OF SINCE DAYS OF YORE WASN'T JUST A LEGEND

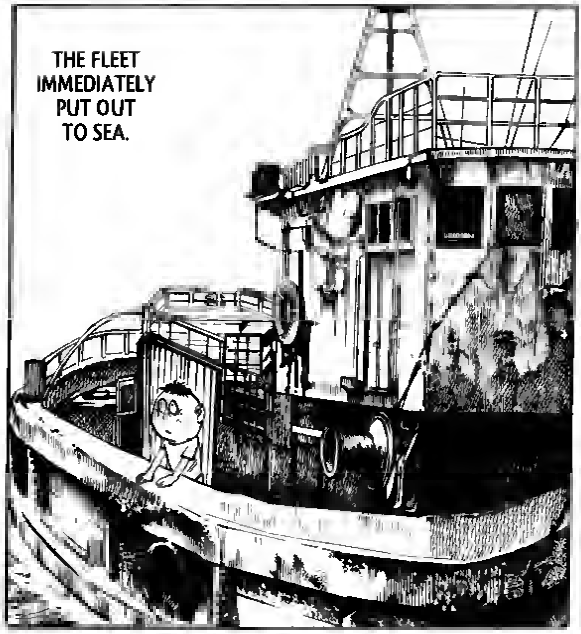

DON'T BE SCARED, BOY. EVERYONE BORN IN THIS VILLAGE BECOMES A FISHERMAN SOONER OR LATER.
大264

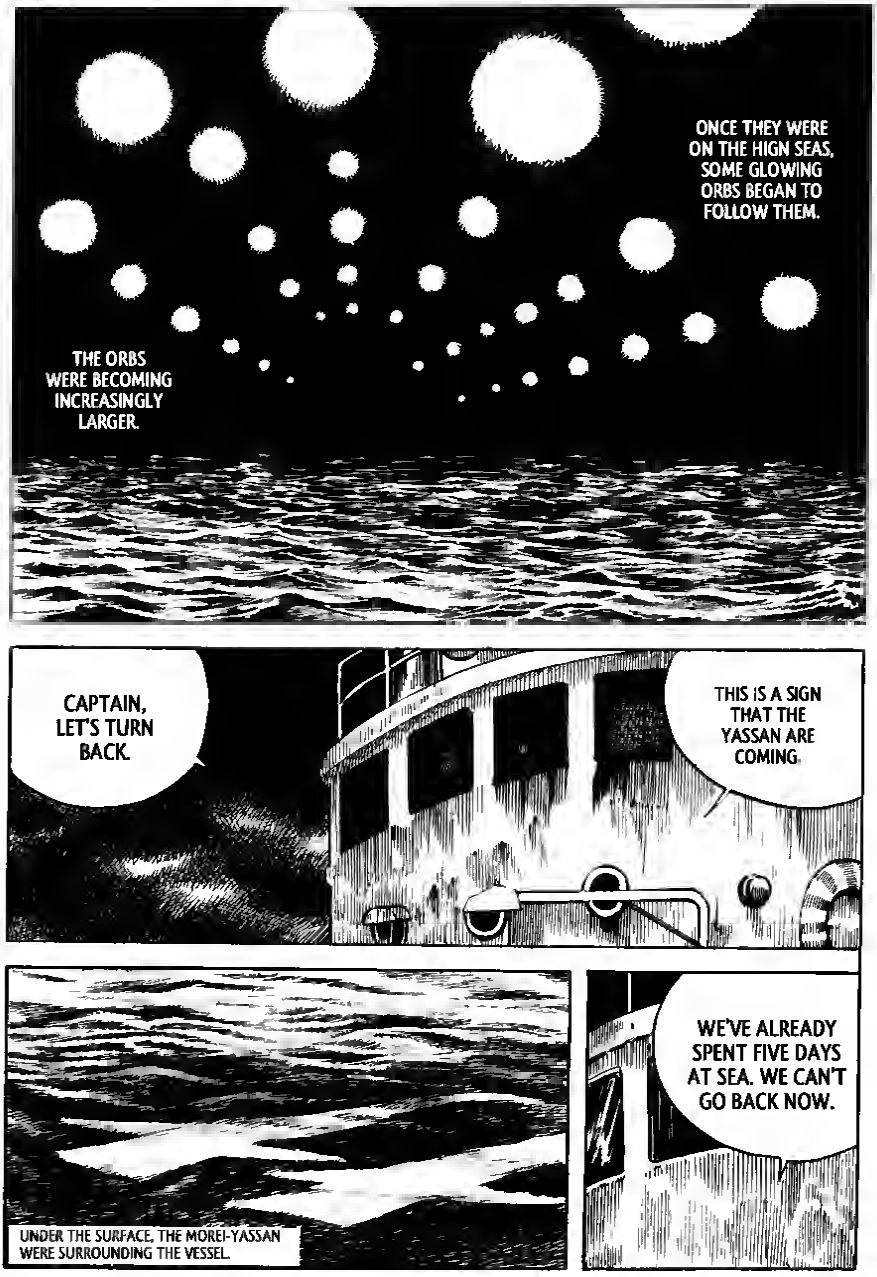

SURE.
COULD YOU TEMPORARILY TAKE HIS PLACE?

GO TO THE DOCK AT ONCE. THEY'RE GOING TO SET SAIL NOW.

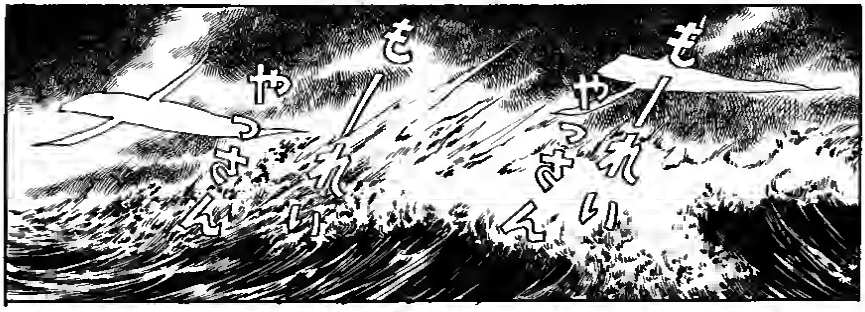

THE SCHOOL OF FISH WAS A WEEK'S JOURNEY AWAY.



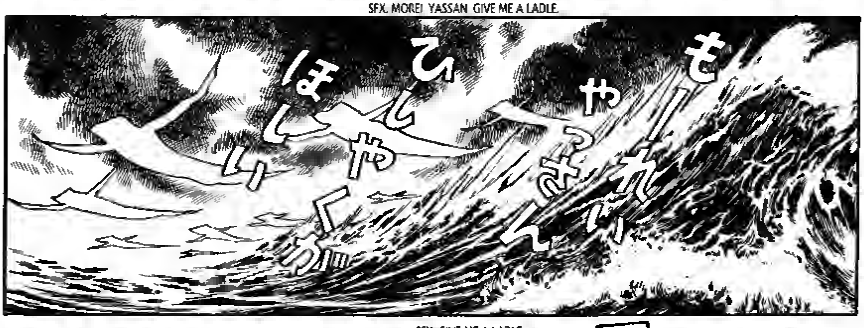

THE FLEET IMMEDIATELY PUT OUT TO SEA.


ONCE THEY WERE ON THE HIGN SEAS, SOME GLOWING ORBS BEGAN TO FOLLOW THEM.
THE ORBS WERE BECOMING INCREASINGLY LARGER.
CAPTAIN, LET'S TURN BACK.
THIS IS A SIGN THAT THE YASSAN ARE COMING.
UNDER THE SURFACE, THE MOREI-YASSAN WERE SURROUNDING THE VESSEL.
WE'VE ALREADY SPENT FIVE DAYS AT SEA. WE CAN'T GO BACK NOW.

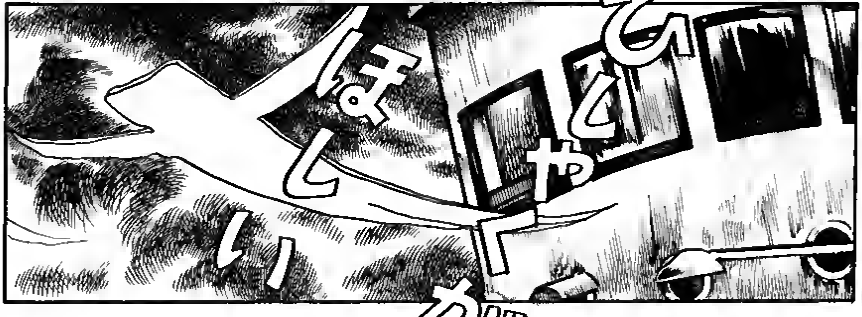
SFX. MOREI YASSAN MOREI YASSAN

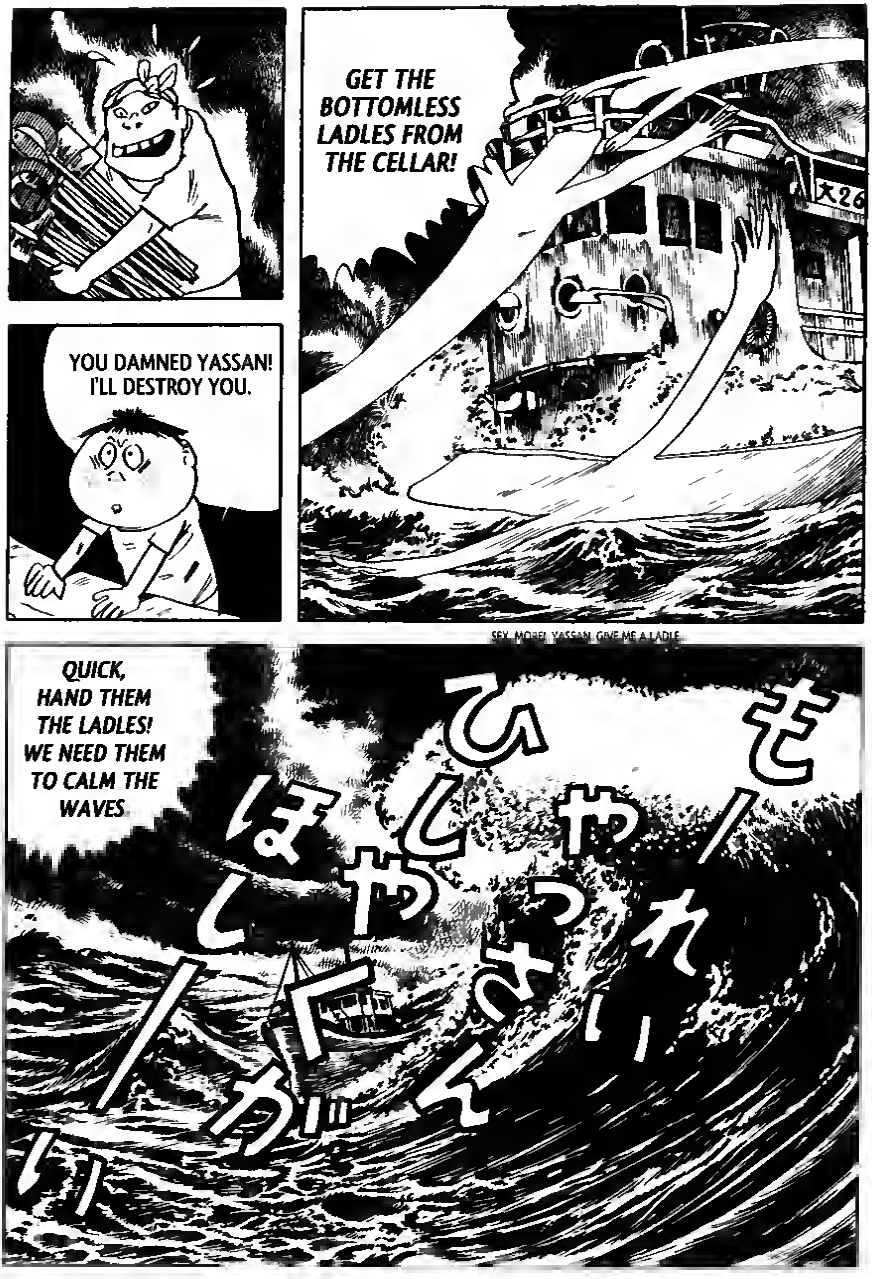


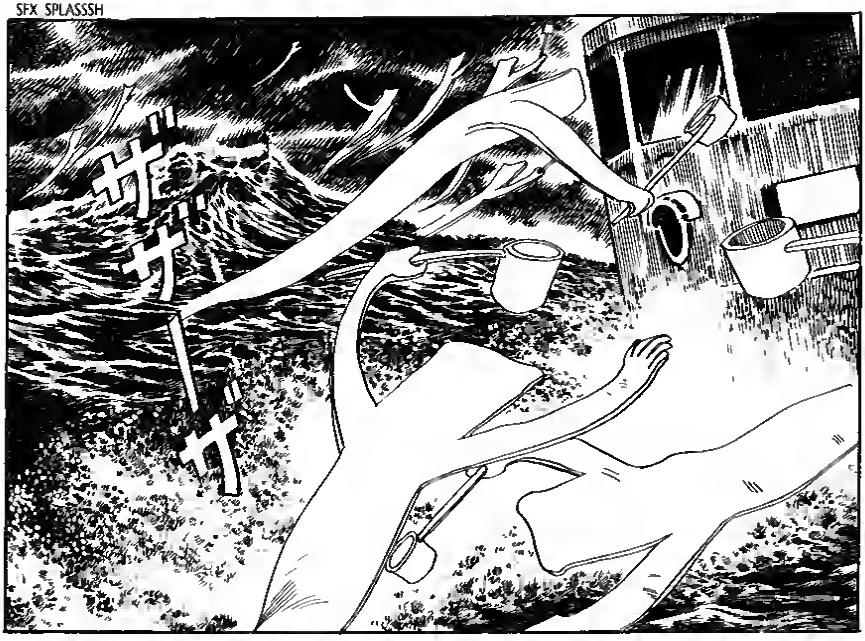
SFX. MOREI YASSAN GIVE ME A LADLE

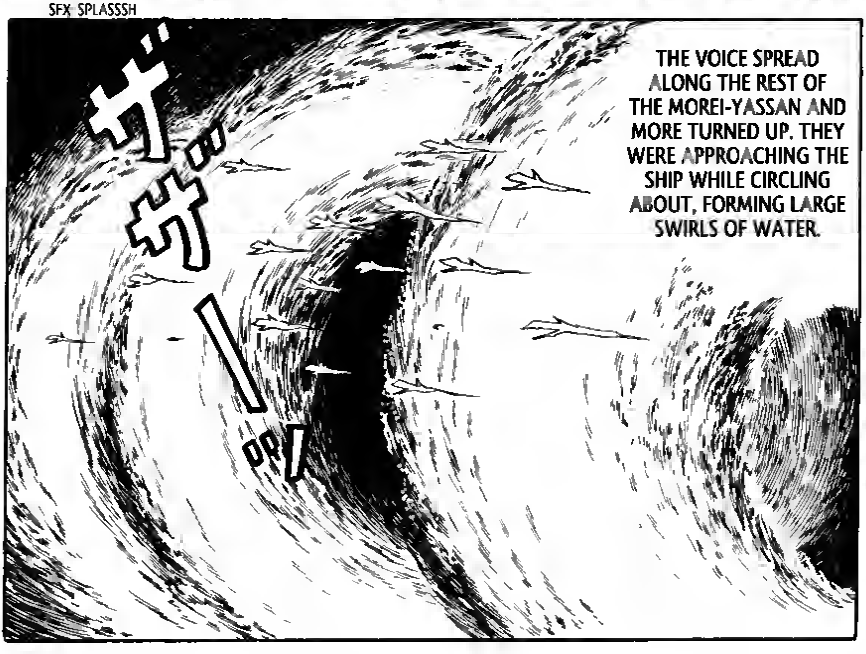


SFX. GIVE ME A LADLE

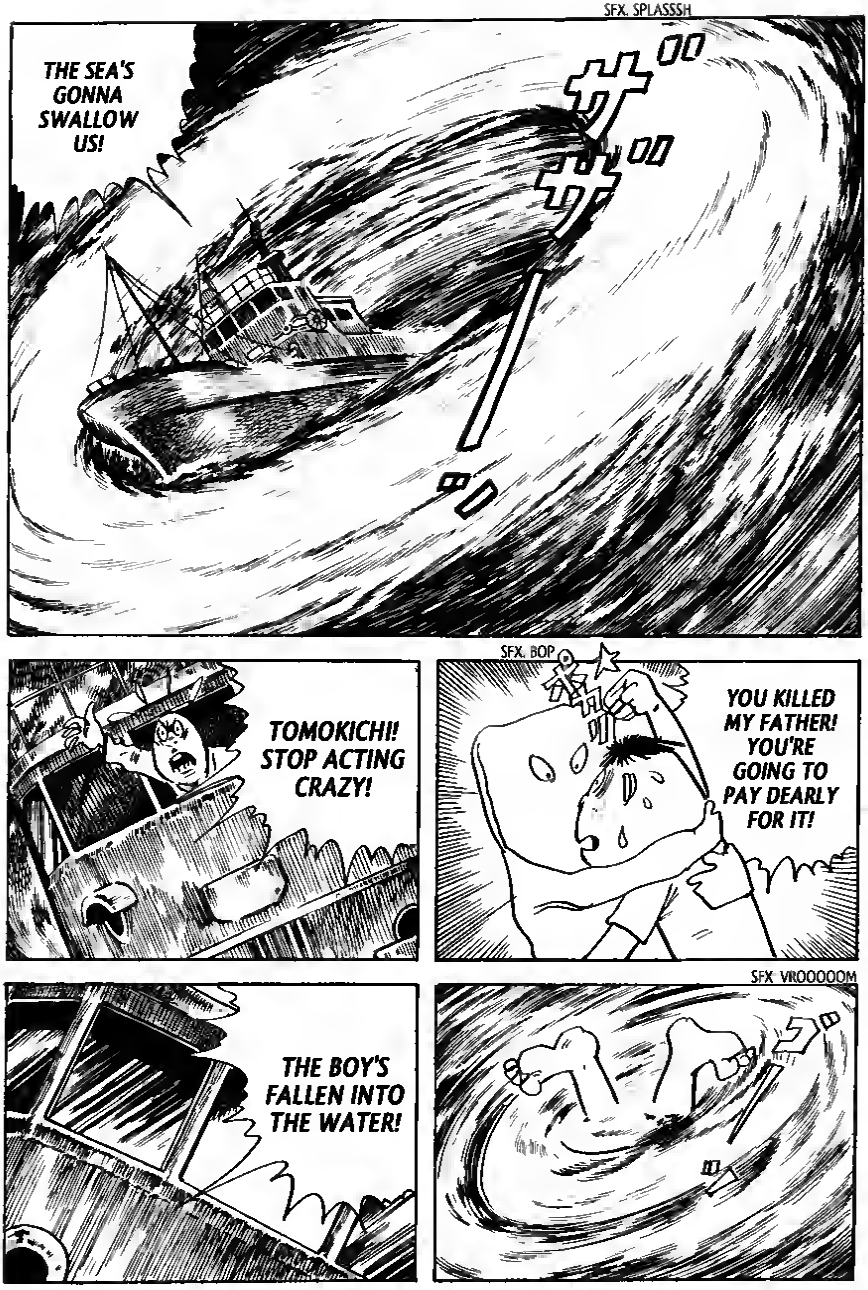


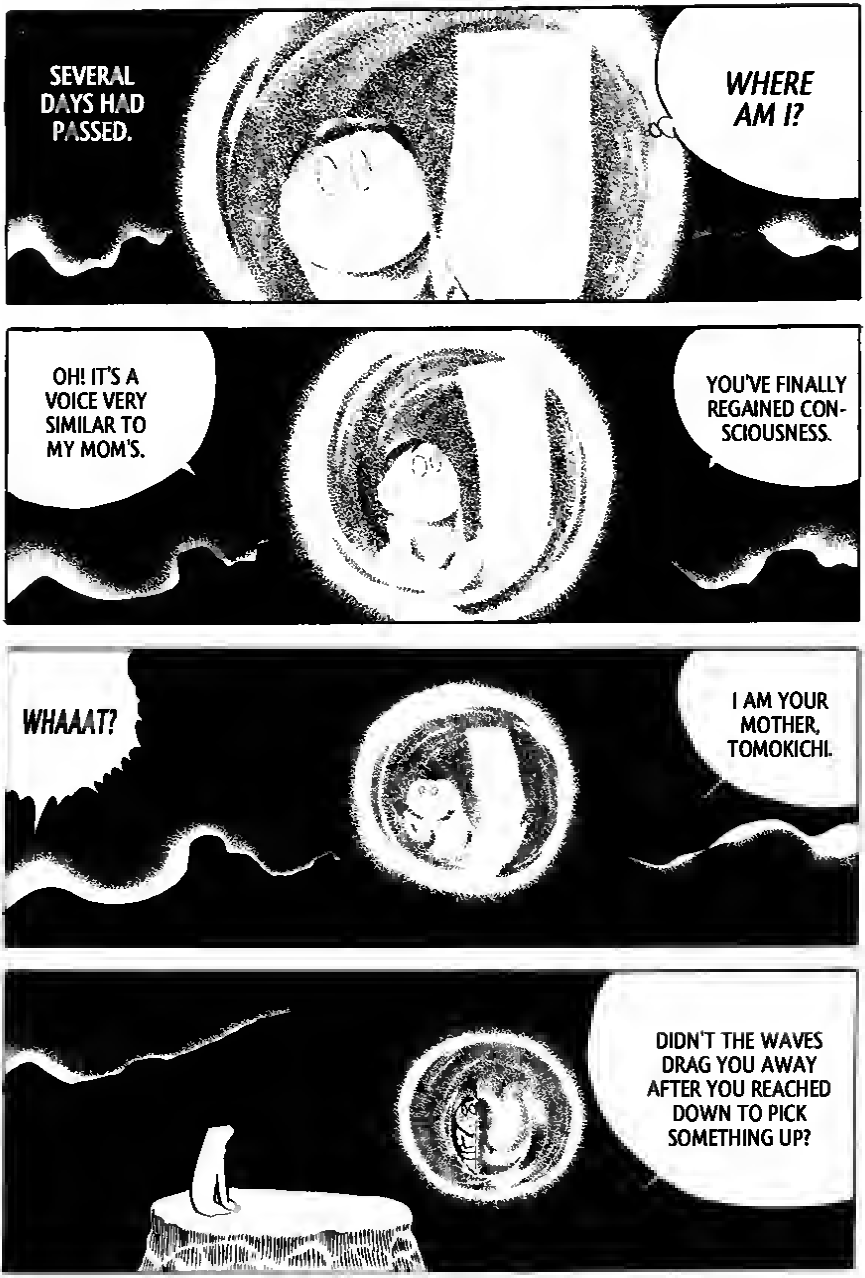

GET THE BOTTOMLESS LADLES FROM THE CELLAR!
YOU DAMNED YASSAN! I'LL DESTROY YOU.
SEY, MORE! YASSAN! GIVE ME A LADLE
QUICK, HAND THEM THE LADLES! WE NEED THEM TO CALM THE WAVES.
もれ
ひしゃくよこせ
ひしゃくかして

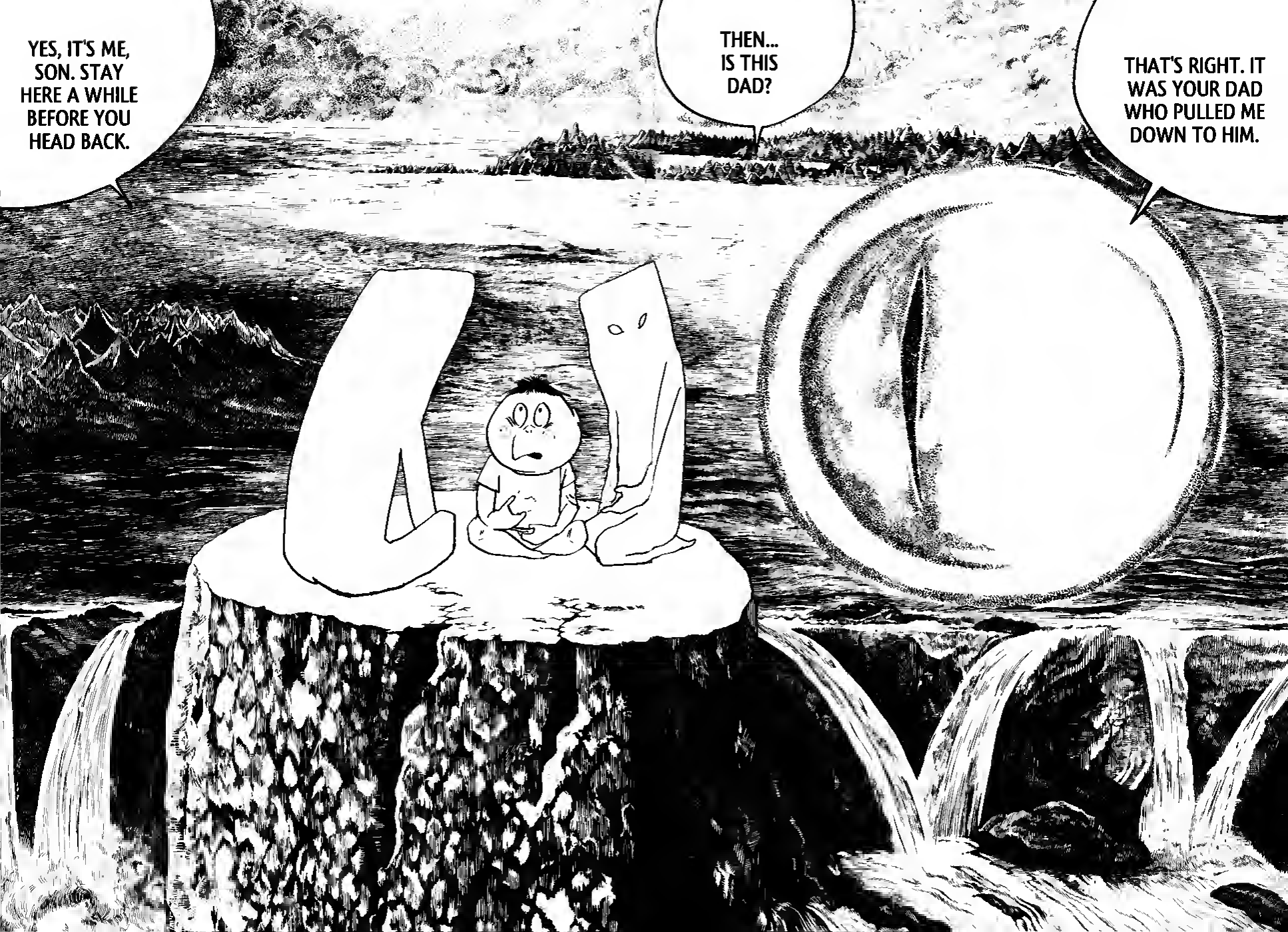

SFX SPLASSSH
ザザザ

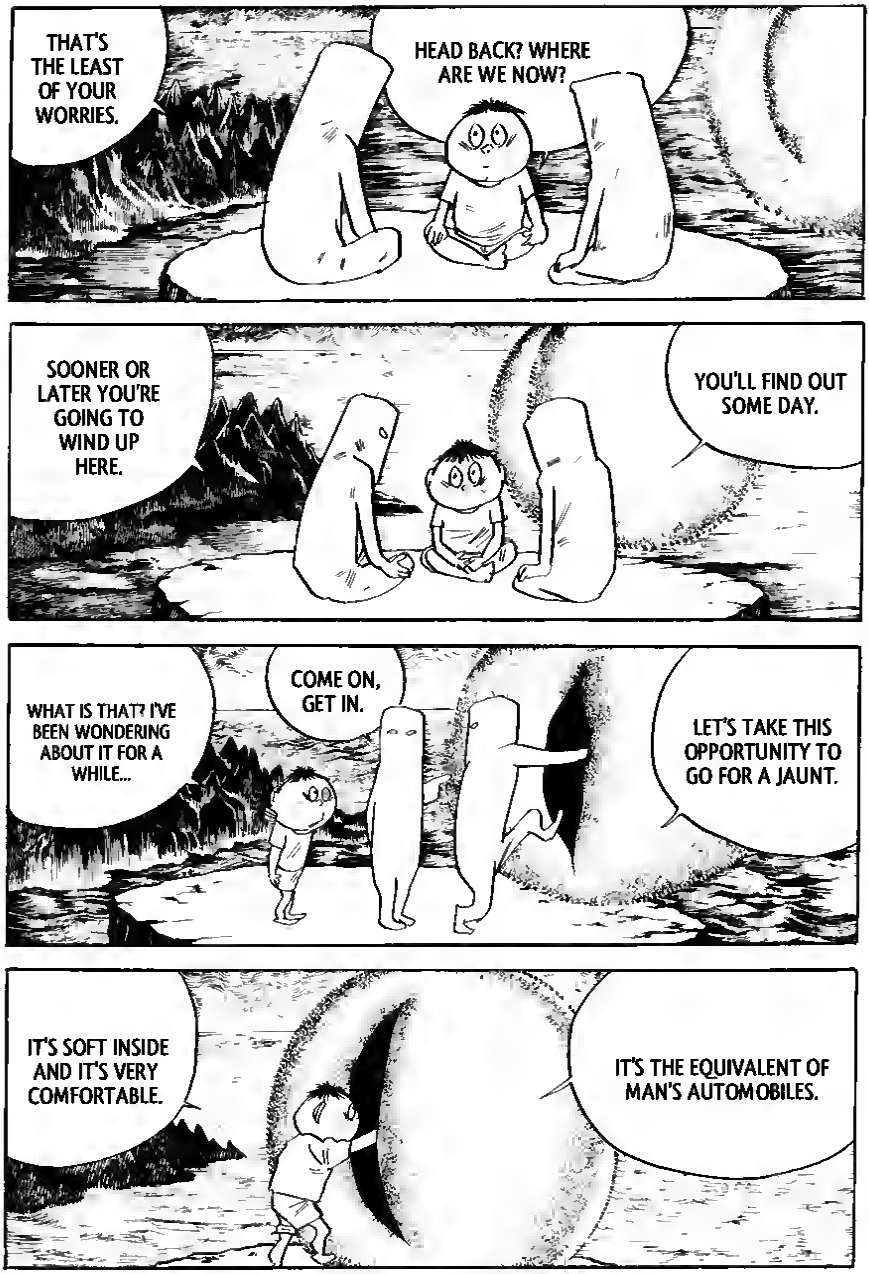

SFX SPLASSSH
ザザザ!!
THE VOICE SPREAD ALONG THE REST OF THE MOREI-YASSAN AND MORE TURNED UP. THEY WERE APPROACHING THE SHIP WHILE CIRCLING ABOUT, FORMING LARGE SWIRLS OF WATER.

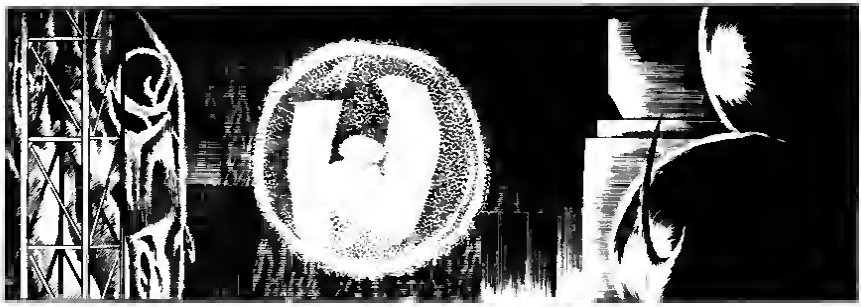
THE SWIRLS GATHERED TOGETHER TO CREATE AN ENORMOUS VORTEX SET TO ENGULF THE KIMPIRA-MARU FROM ITS STERN.
SPLASSSSH
ザ…
ザ…
ゴ…
ゴ…


SFX. SPLASSSH
THE SEA'S GONNA SWALLOW US!
TOMOKICHI! STOP ACTING CRAZY!
SFX. BOP
YOU KILLED MY FATHER! YOU'RE GOING TO PAY DEARLY FOR IT!
THE BOY'S FALLEN INTO THE WATER!
SFX VROOOOOM

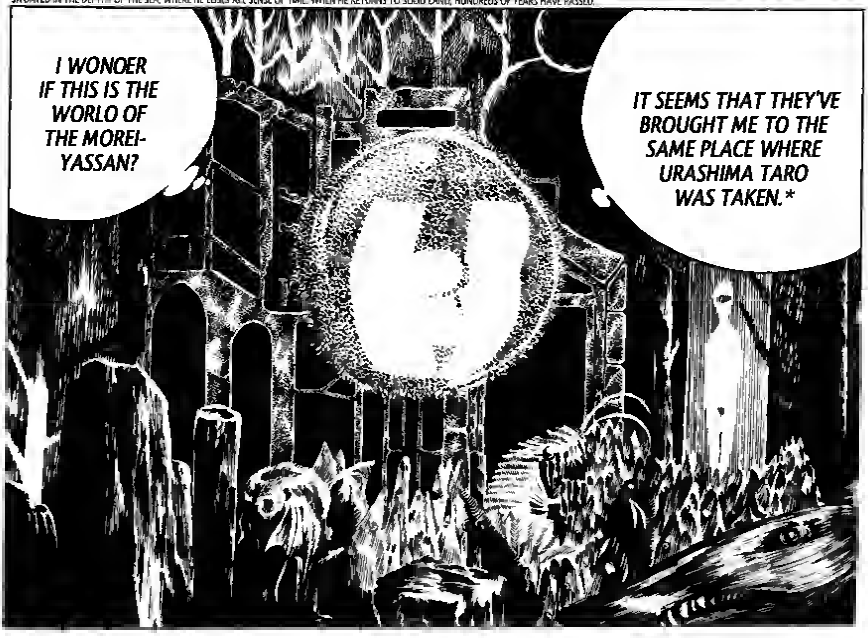

SEVERAL DAYS HAD PASSED.
WHERE AM I?
OH! IT'S A VOICE VERY SIMILAR TO MY MOM'S.
YOU'VE FINALLY REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS.
WHAAAT?
I AM YOUR MOTHER, TOMOKICHI.
DIDN'T THE WAVES DRAG YOU AWAY AFTER YOU REACHED DOWN TO PICK SOMETHING UP?


YES, IT'S ME, SON. STAY HERE A WHILE BEFORE YOU HEAD BACK.
THEN... IS THIS DAD?
THAT'S RIGHT. IT WAS YOUR DAD WHO PULLED ME DOWN TO HIM.

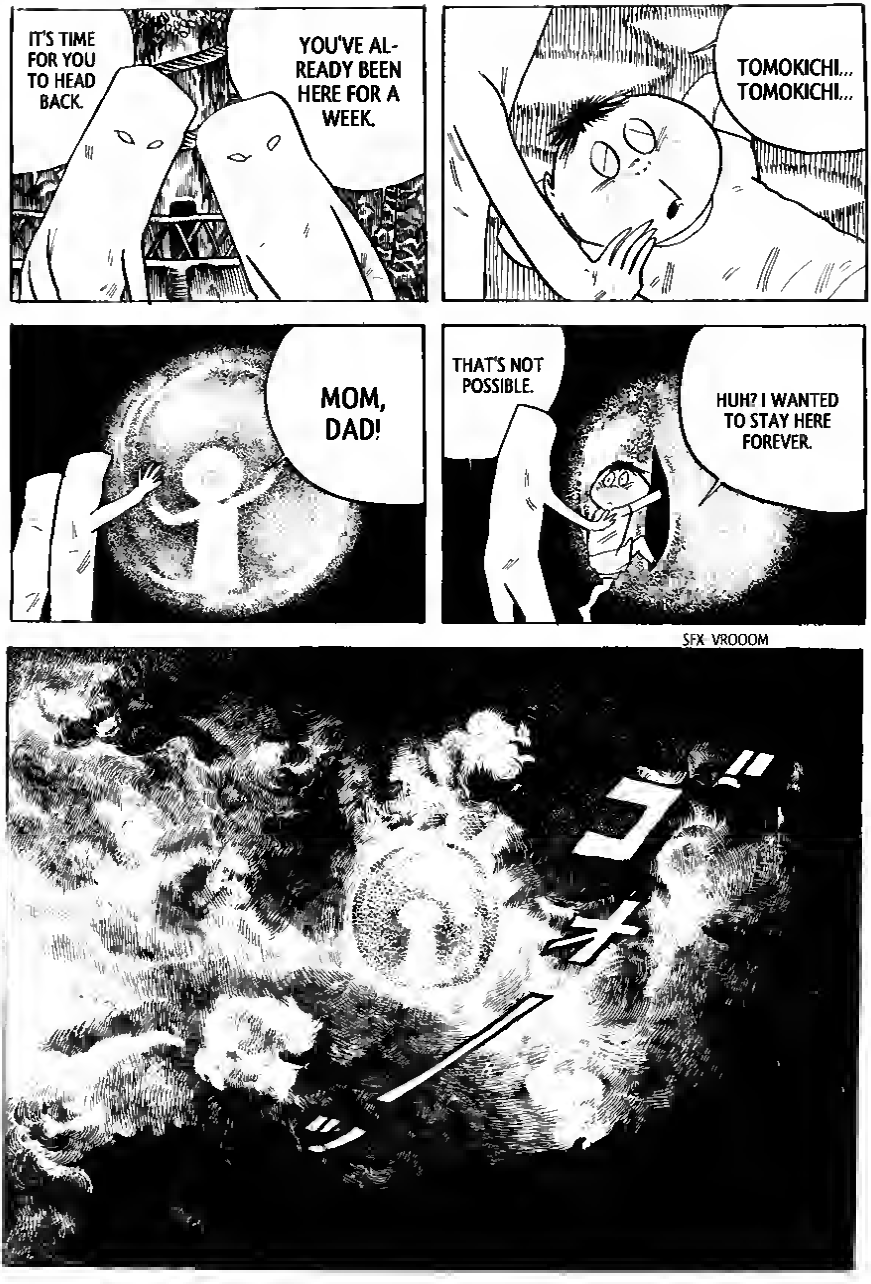

THAT'S THE LEAST OF YOUR WORRIES.
HEAD BACK? WHERE ARE WE NOW?
SOONER OR LATER YOU'RE GOING TO WIND UP HERE.
YOU'LL FIND OUT SOME DAY.
WHAT IS THAT? I'VE BEEN WONDERING ABOUT IT FOR A WHILE...
COME ON, GET IN.
LET'S TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO GO FOR A JAUNT.
IT'S SOFT INSIDE AND IT'S VERY COMFORTABLE.
IT'S THE EQUIVALENT OF MAN'S AUTOMOBILES.

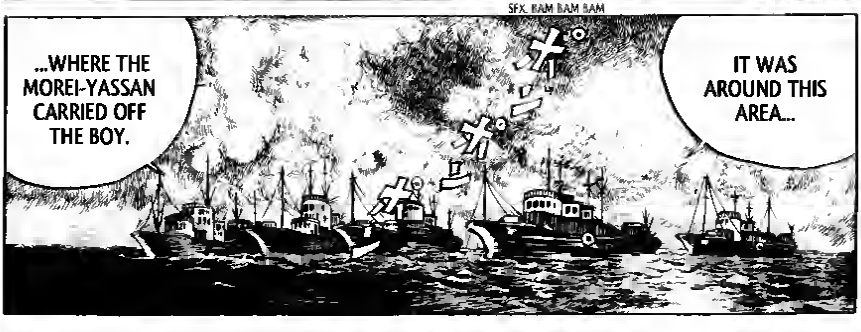


*URASHIMA TARO: CHARACTER OF A POPULAR JAPANESE TALE. IT'S ABOUT A FISHERMAN THAT IS INVITED TO THE CASTLE OF THE DRAGON (RYUGU-JO), SITUATED IN THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA, WHERE HE LOSES ALL SENSE OF TIME. WHEN HE RETURNS TO SOLID LAND, HUNDREDS OF YEARS HAVE PASSED.

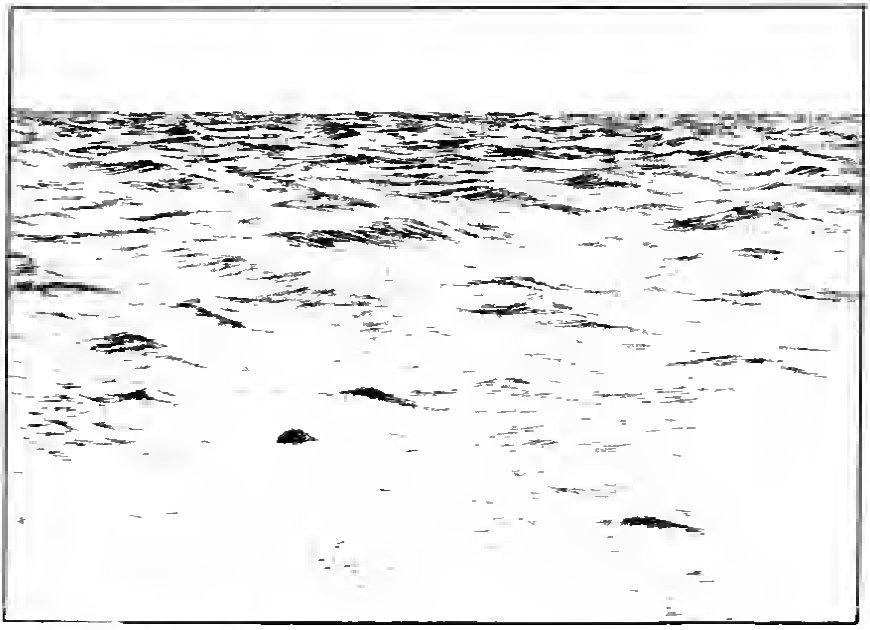

I WONOER IF THIS IS THE WORLO OF THE MOREI-YASSAN?
IT SEEMS THAT THEY'VE BROUGHT ME TO THE SAME PLACE WHERE URASHIMA TARO WAS TAKEN.*

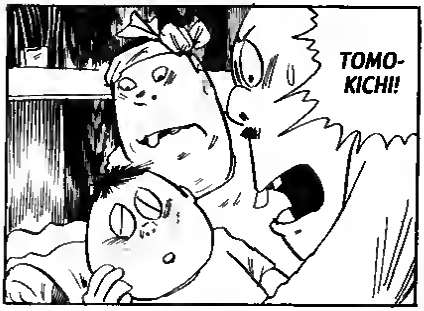
DON'T BE IN SUCH A RUSH. YOU'LL COME BACK LATER ON. FOR NOW, YOUR PLACE IS ON LAND.
WOW. THIS IS AMAZING! I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE THIS PLACE.


IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO HEAD BACK.
YOU'VE ALREADY BEEN HERE FOR A WEEK.
TOMOKICHI... TOMOKICHI...
MOM, DAD!
THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE.
HUH? I WANTED TO STAY HERE FOREVER.
SFX VROOOM

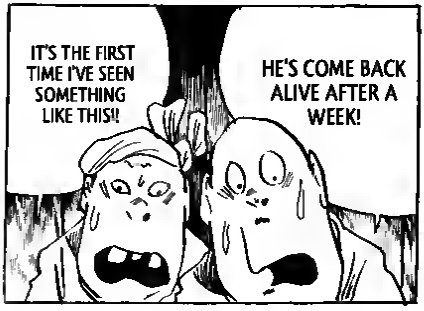

SFX. BAM BAM BAM
...WHERE THE MOREI-YASSAN CARRIED OFF THE BOY.
IT WAS AROUND THIS AREA...

IT'S A FLOATING CADAVER!
SOMETHING'S VISIBLE OVER THERE.

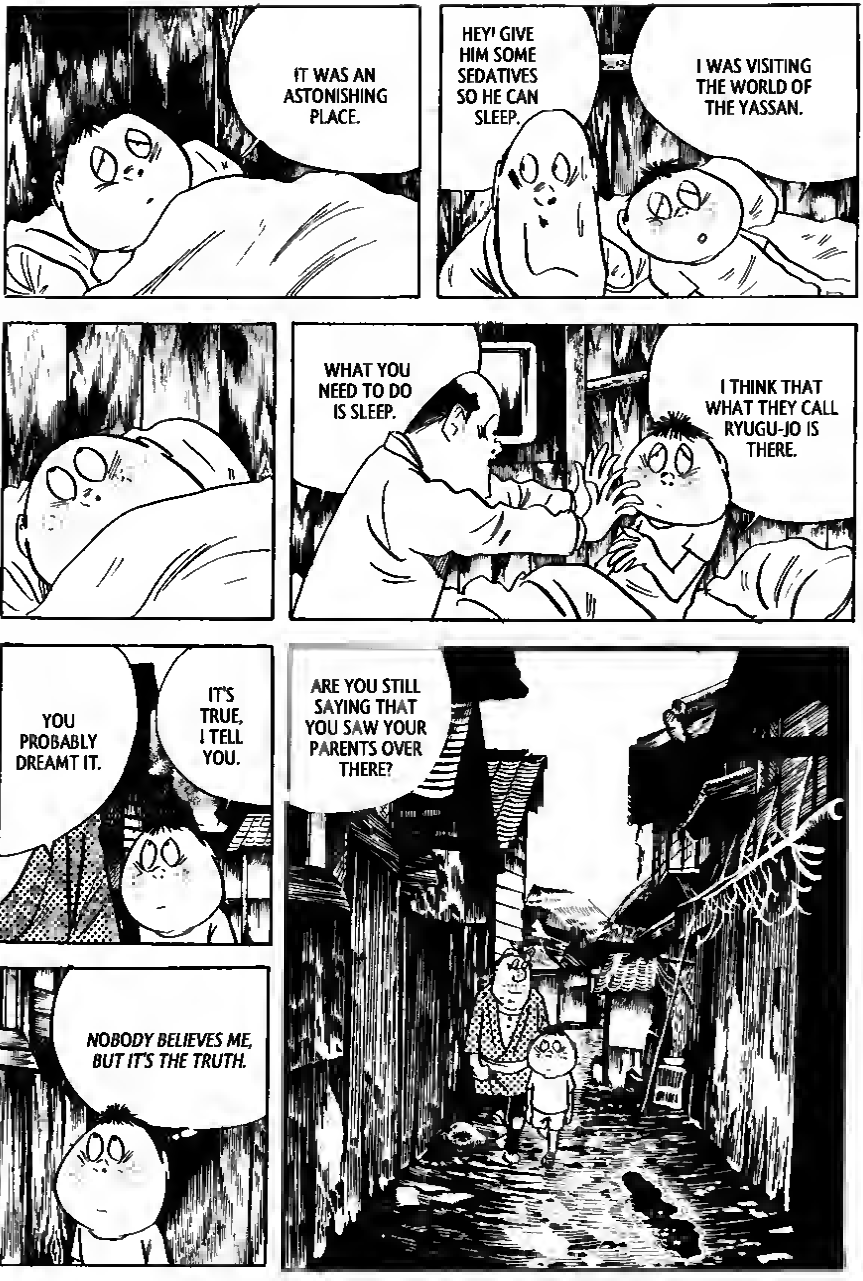



TOMO-
KICHI!!

POOR
BOY.
IT'S
TOMO-
KICHI!


IT'S THE FIRST
TIME I'VE SEEN
SOMETHING
LIKE THIS!!
HE'S COME BACK
ALIVE AFTER A
WEEK!

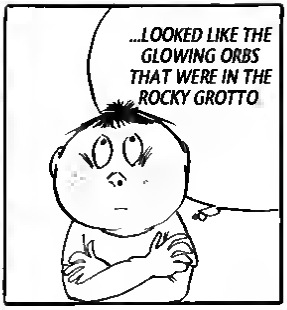
WHERE
AM I?
WHAT?


IT WAS AN ASTONISHING PLACE.
I WAS VISITING THE WORLD OF THE YASSAN.
HEY! GIVE HIM SOME SEDATIVES SO HE CAN SLEEP.
I THINK THAT WHAT THEY CALL RYUGU-JO IS THERE.
WHAT YOU NEED TO DO IS SLEEP.
IT'S TRUE, I TELL YOU.
YOU PROBABLY DREAMT IT.
ARE YOU STILL SAYING THAT YOU SAW YOUR PARENTS OVER THERE?
NOBODY BELIEVES ME, BUT IT'S THE TRUTH.

THAT SPHERICAL CAR THAT MOM AND DAD DROVE...

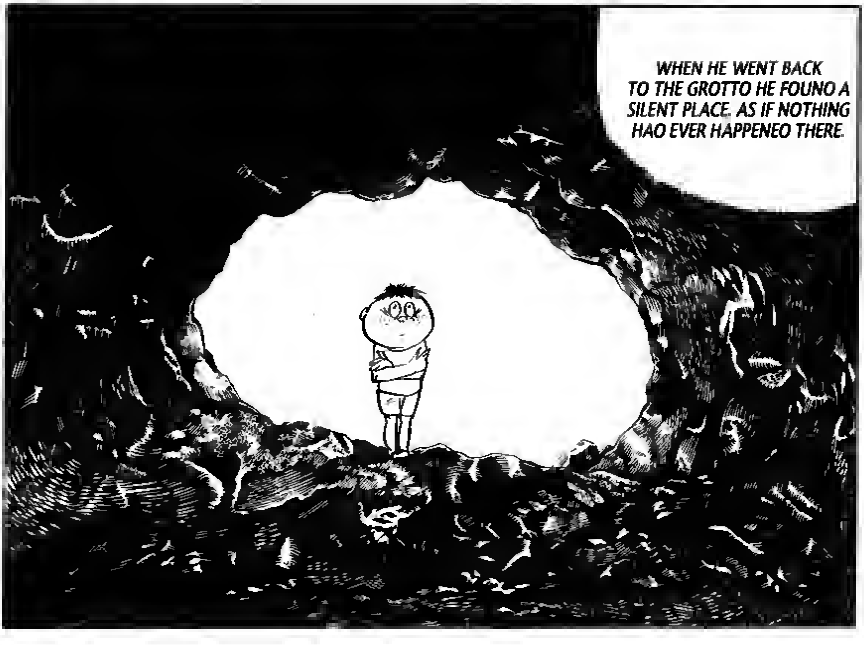
...

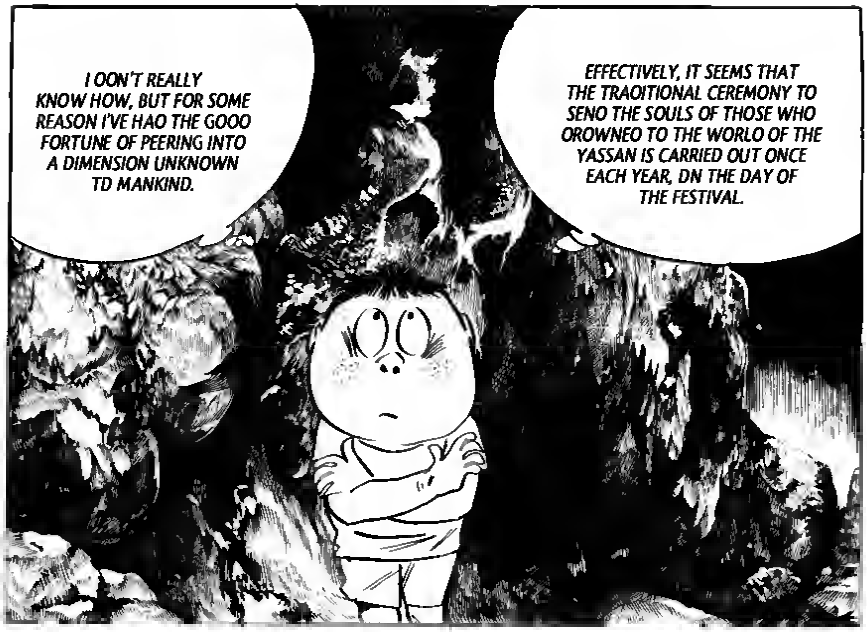
SURELY THEY'RE A WAY TO CONNECT THE WORLD OF THE LIVING AND THE WORLD OF THE DEAD. BUT PHYSICAL BODIES SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO RIDE IN THEM

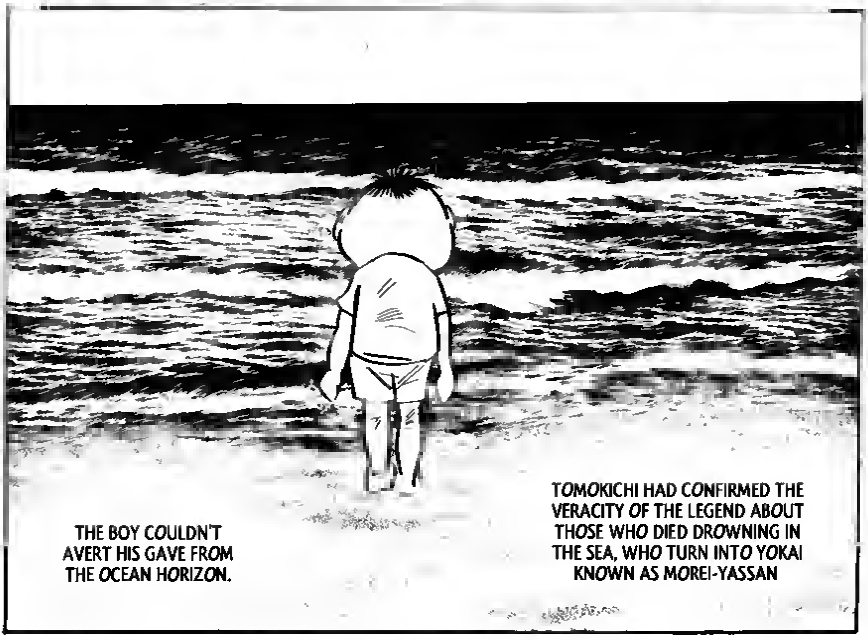

...LOOKED LIKE THE GLOWING ORBS THAT WERE IN THE ROCKY GROTTO

NOW THAT I RECALL, IT SEEMED THAT THERE WERE SOME HUMAN SILHOUETTES INSIDE. THEY MUST HAVE BEEN SOME SOULS TRAVELING IN GHOSTLY VEHICLES.

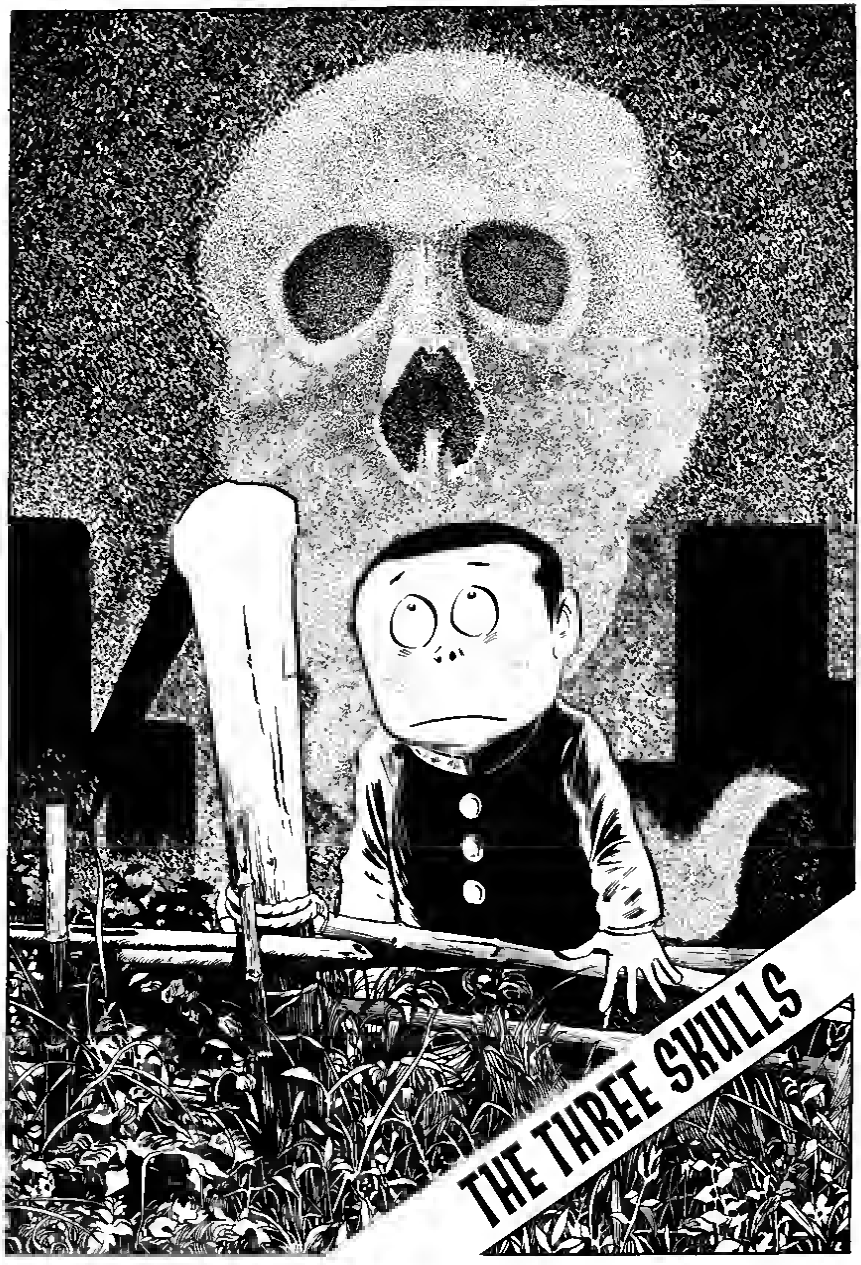
PERHAPS THE SOULS OF MY PARENTS TOOK ME TO THE WORLD OF THE YASSAN WHILE I WAS UNCONSCIOUS.


WHEN HE WENT BACK TO THE GROTTO HE FOUNO A SILENT PLACE. AS IF NOTHING HAO EVER HAPPENEO THERE.


I OON'T REALLY KNOW HOW, BUT FOR SOME REASON I'VE HAO THE GOOO FORTUNE OF PEERING INTO A DIMENSION UNKNOWN TO MANKIND.
EFFECTIVELY, IT SEEMS THAT THE TRAOITIONAL CEREMONY TO SENO THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO OROWNEO TO THE WORLO OF THE YASSAN IS CARRIED OUT ONCE EACH YEAR, ON THE DAY OF THE FESTIVAL.


THE BOY COULDN'T AVERT HIS GAVE FROM THE OCEAN HORIZON.
TOMOKICHI HAD CONFIRMED THE VERACITY OF THE LEGEND ABOUT THOSE WHO DIED DROWNING IN THE SEA, WHO TURN INTO YOKAI KNOWN AS MOREI-YASSAN

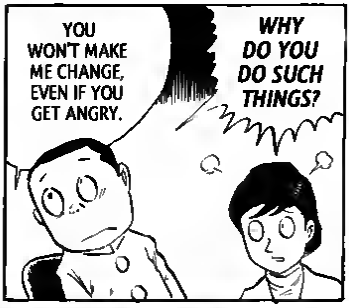
PRESENTED BY HAPPY SCANS

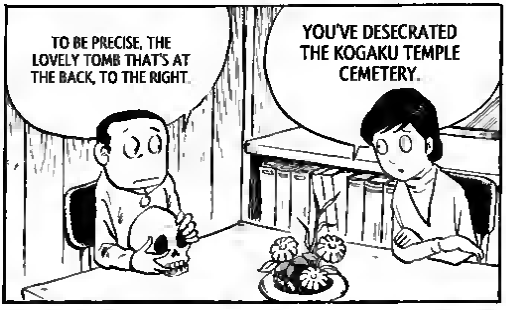


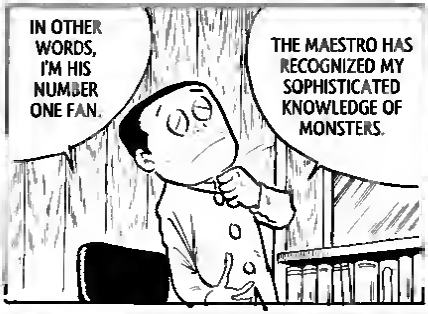
SFX. SSSSSH
SFX. WHOOOO
...FOR STEALING SKULLS IN THE CEM-ETERY.
IT'S THE IDEAL WEATHER...
THIS IS TURNING INTO A HURRICANE... EXCELLENT!
SFX. WHOOOO
OH!
SFX. SSSSSH
IT'S A GOOD THING I'M WEARING A RAINCOAT.

IT MUST HAVE GOOD MATERIAL.
SFX: TCHAK
SFX: SSSSH
THIS TOMB LOOKS PROMISING.
THE NEXT DAY...
BINGO!
THEY MUST HAVE DIED AT THE SAME TIME
NOT ONE, BUT THREE TOP-NOTCH SKULLS.

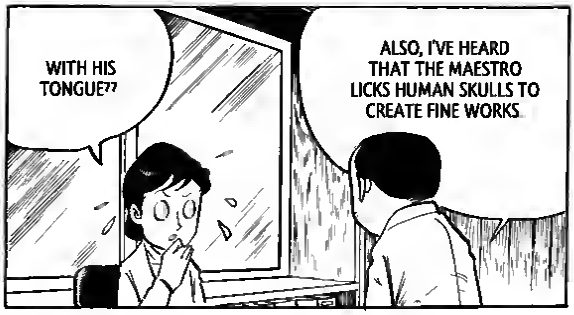
IT'S USELESS TO HIDE IT.
I KNOW EXACTLY WHERE YOU WERE LAST NIGHT.


YOU WON'T MAKE ME CHANGE, EVEN IF YOU GET ANGRY.
WHY DO YOU DO SUCH THINGS?


TO BE PRECISE, THE LOVELY TOMB THAT'S AT THE BACK, TO THE RIGHT.
YOU'VE DESECRATED THE KOGAKU TEMPLE CEMETERY.

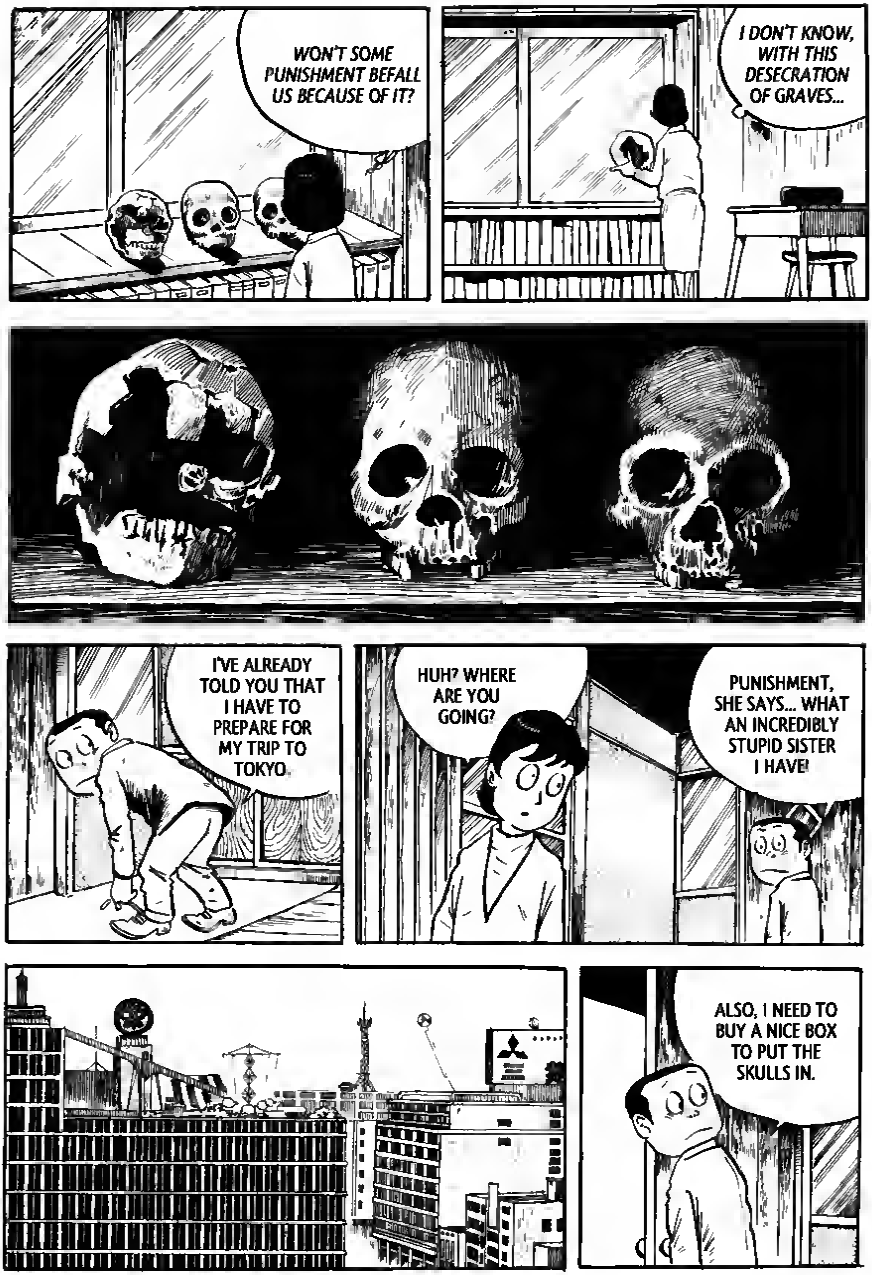

IN OTHER WORDS, I'M HIS NUMBER ONE FAN.
THE MAESTRO HAS RECOGNIZED MY SOPHISTICATED KNOWLEDGE OF MONSTERS.

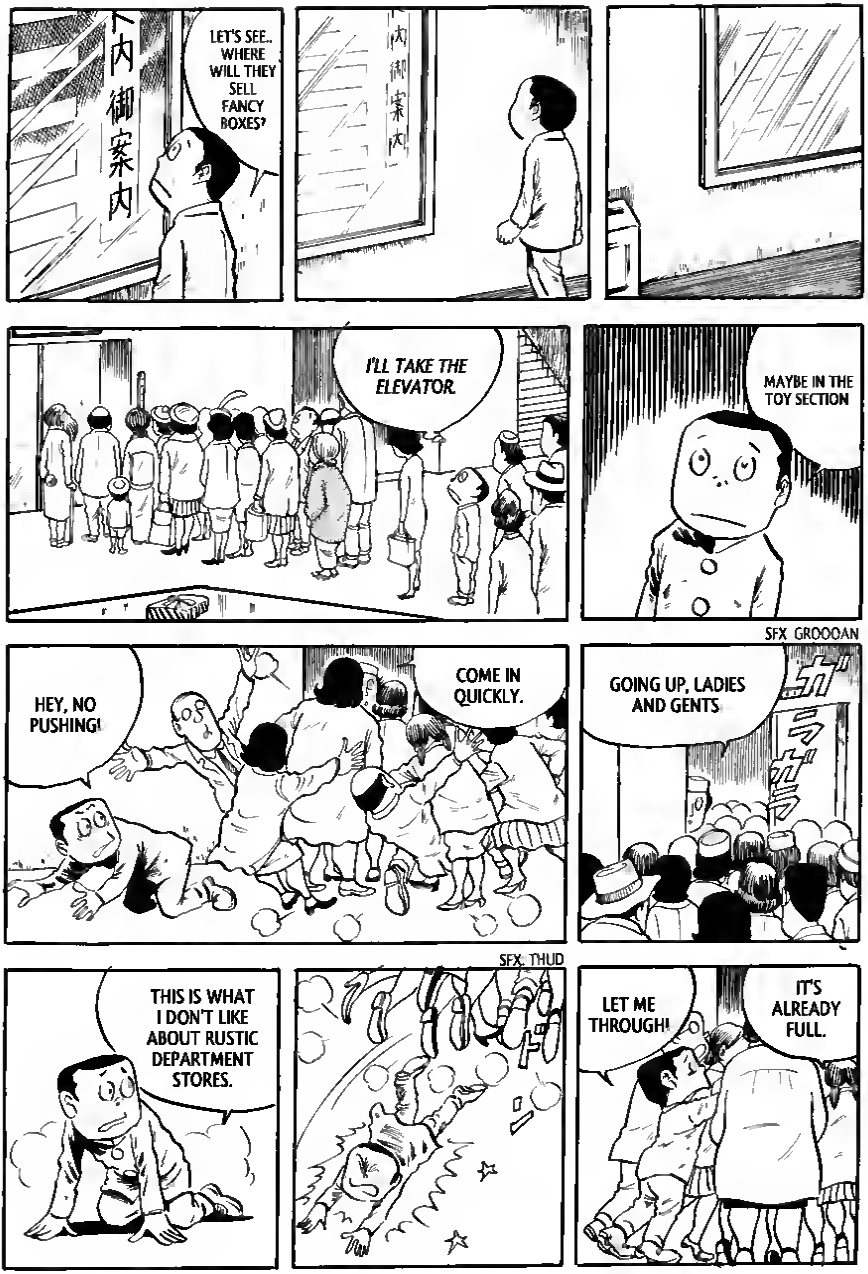
YOU KNOW FULL WELL THAT IN THREE DAYS I'M GOING TO TOKYO BY INVITATION OF KAZUO MIZUKI, THE GREAT ARTIST OF THE MONSTER GENRE.

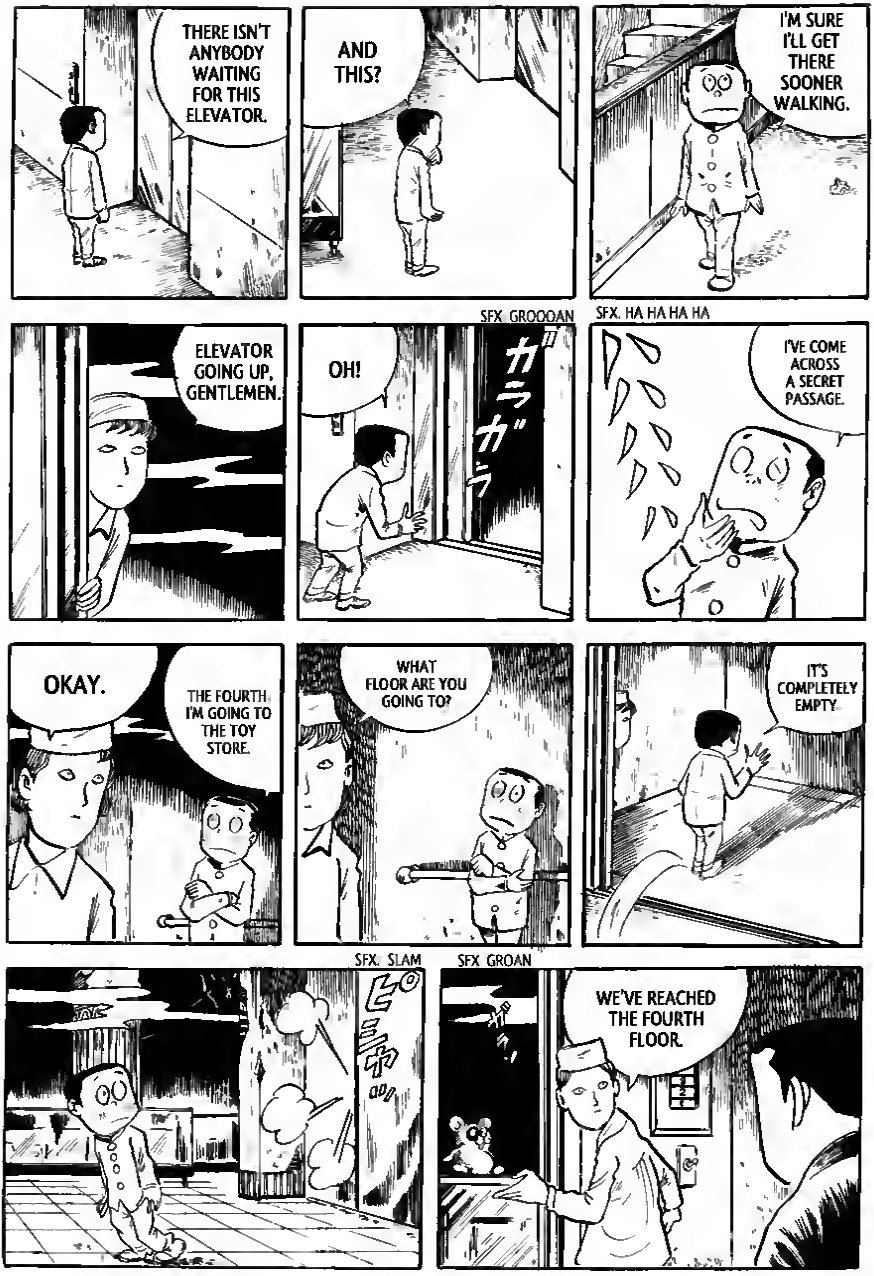

WITH HIS TONGUE??
ALSO, I'VE HEARD THAT THE MAESTRO LICKS HUMAN SKULLS TO CREATE FINE WORKS.

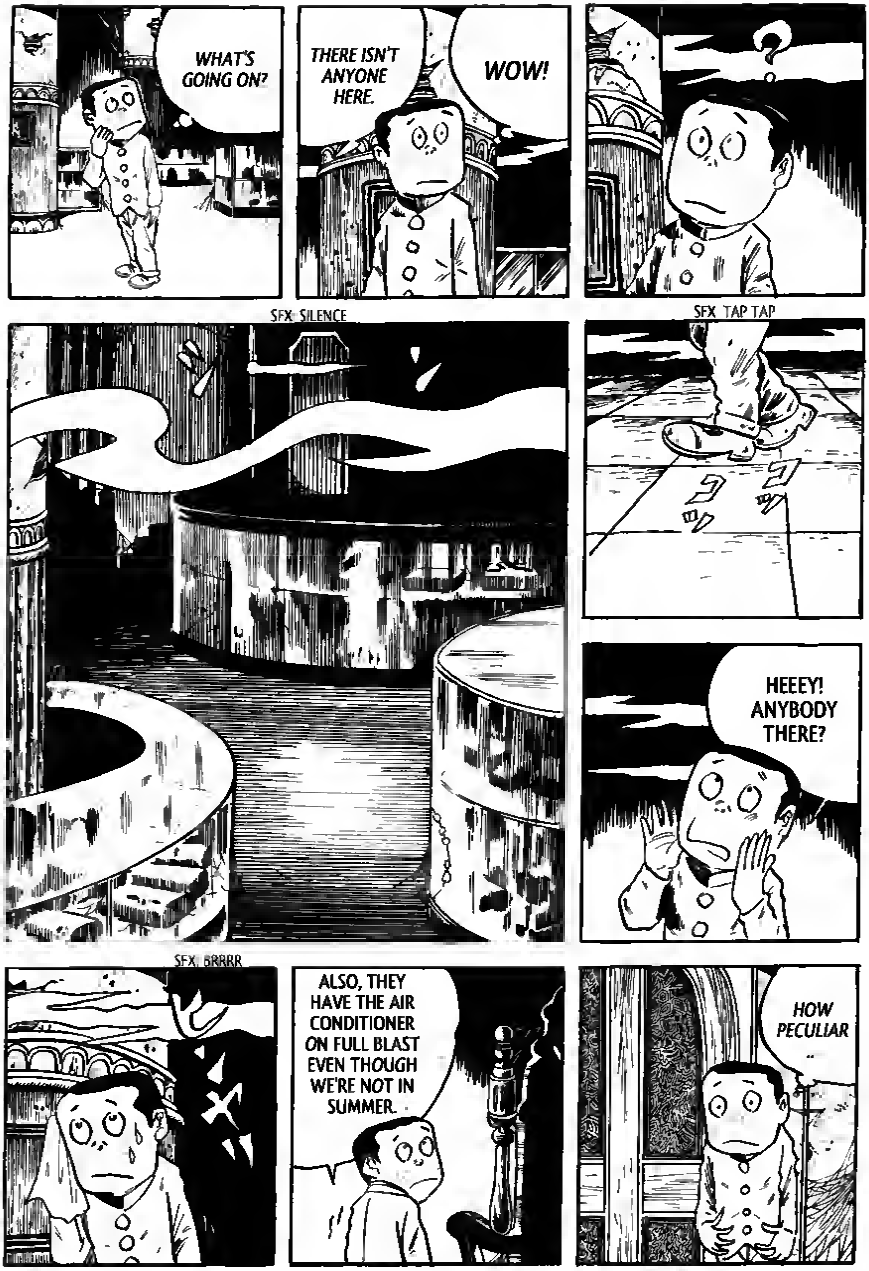
I WANT TO GIVE HIM THE BEST OF GIFTS WHEN I MEET HIM. DON'T YOU THINK THAT IT'S A MARVEL?

YOU DARED TO INSULT MY VENERATED MAESTRO MIZUKI.
INSANE?!
THAT GUY'S INSANE!
SO YOU SEE, IT'S AN ITEM OF THE HIGHEST NECESSITY FOR DRAWING.
SFX: BONK
コン
OW!
NOT A BIT...
DON'T YOU THINK YOU'VE GONE A LITTLE TOO FAR?
SFX: SLAM
ばたん
I HATE PEOPLE WHO DON'T KNOW HOW TO APPRECIATE MANGA.
IT'S BEEN SMASHED TO PIECES.
OH.


WON'T SOME PUNISHMENT BEFALL US BECAUSE OF IT?
I DON'T KNOW, WITH THIS DESECRATION OF GRAVES...
I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT I HAVE TO PREPARE FOR MY TRIP TO TOKYO.
HUH? WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
PUNISHMENT, SHE SAYS... WHAT AN INCREDIBLY STUPID SISTER I HAVE!
ALSO, I NEED TO BUY A NICE BOX TO PUT THE SKULLS IN.


LET'S SEE.. WHERE WILL THEY SELL FANCY BOXES?
I'LL TAKE THE ELEVATOR.
MAYBE IN THE TOY SECTION
SFX GROOOAN
HEY, NO PUSHING!
COME IN QUICKLY.
GOING UP, LADIES AND GENTS
SFX THUD
THIS IS WHAT I DON'T LIKE ABOUT RUSTIC DEPARTMENT STORES.
LET ME THROUGH!
IT'S ALREADY FULL.

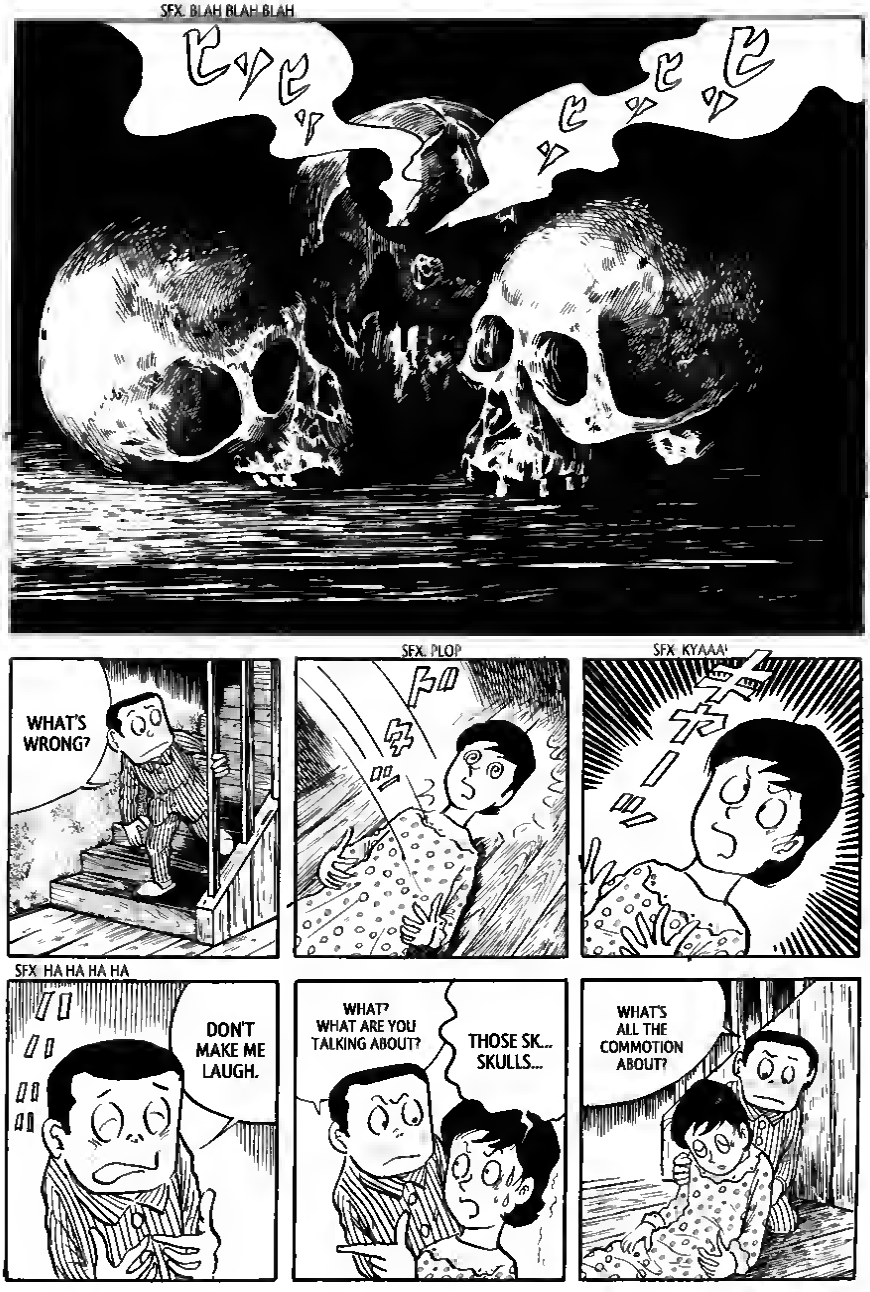

THERE ISN'T ANYBODY WAITING FOR THIS ELEVATOR.
AND THIS?
I'M SURE I'LL GET THERE SOONER WALKING.
ELEVATOR GOING UP, GENTLEMEN.
SFX. GROOOAN
OH!
ガラガラ
SFX. HA HA HA HA
I'VE COME ACROSS A SECRET PASSAGE.
OKAY.
THE FOURTH. I'M GOING TO THE TOY STORE.
WHAT FLOOR ARE YOU GOING TO?
IT'S COMPLETELY EMPTY.
SFX. SLAM
ピシャ
SFX GROAN
WE'VE REACHED THE FOURTH FLOOR.

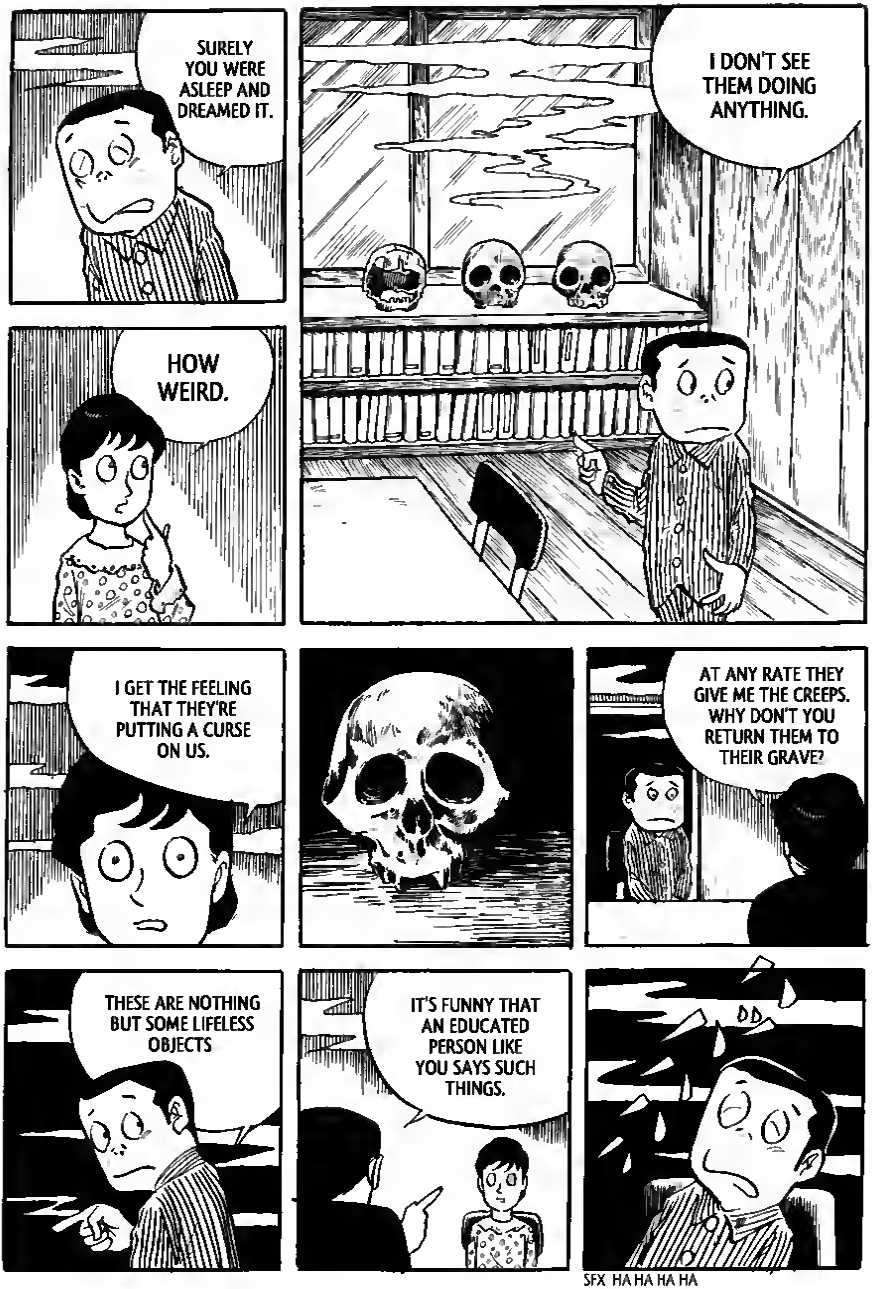

WHAT'S GOING ON?
THERE ISN'T ANYONE HERE.
WOW!
?
SFX: SILENCE
SFX: TAP TAP
HEEEY! ANYBODY THERE?
SFX: GRRRR
ALSO, THEY HAVE THE AIR CONDITIONER ON FULL BLAST EVEN THOUGH WE'RE NOT IN SUMMER.
HOW PECULIAR

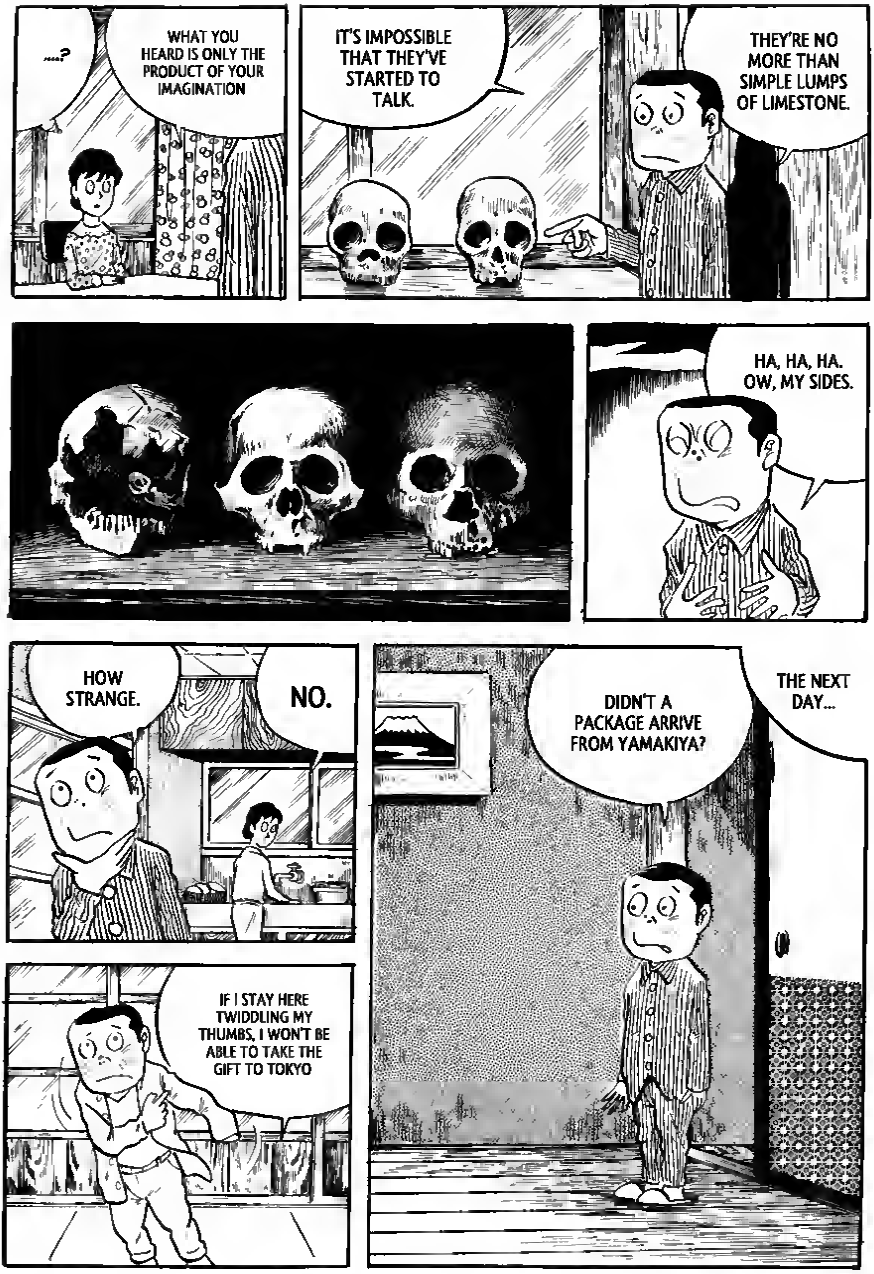
HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?
IS THERE REALLY NOBODY HERE?
THE SERVICE IS LOUSY.
WHAT'S UP WITH THIS DEPARTMENT?
LOOKING FOR SOMETHING, SIR?
THERE AREN'T ANY CUSTOMERS OR ANY CLERKS.
RIGHT AWAY.
YES, A BOX TO PUT SKULLS IN.
ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

WE'LL SEND IT TO YOU TOMORROW.
THIS...? WELL, IT'S UNIQUE.
DOES THIS LOOK GOOD TO YOU?
SFX: SLAM
SFX: GROAN
ELEVATOR GOING DOWN.
ガラン
WELL, YES... BUT THAT FLOOR WAS VERY ODD.
DID YOU FIND WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR?
OUTSIDE HE ENCOUNTERED THE USUAL HUBBUB THE YOUNG FUTOSHI UEKI HAD A FEELING THAT HE'D TRAVELED TO ANOTHER WORLD.
特
WE'VE ARRIVED AT THE GROUND FLOOR.

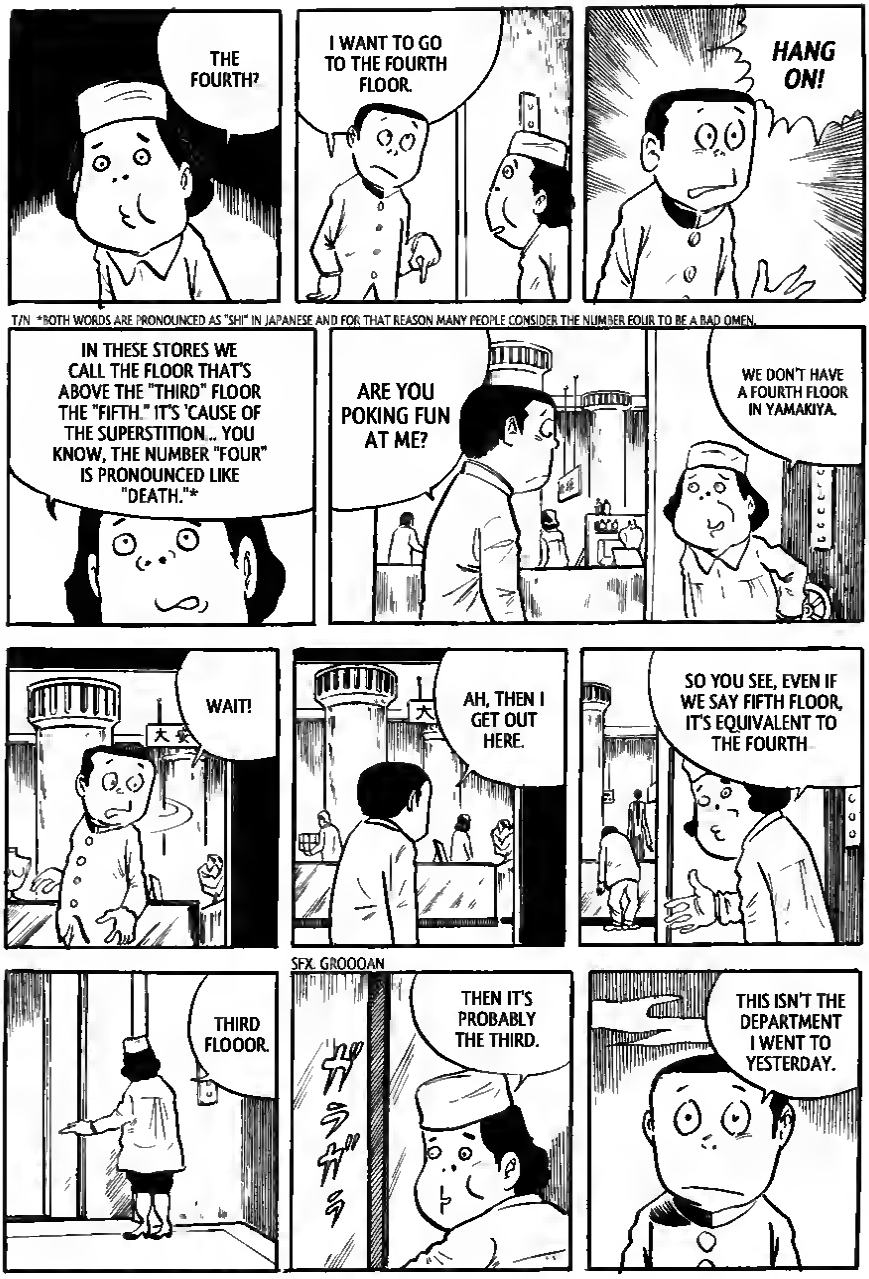
SFX. DONG DONG
I THOUGHT I HEARD PEOPLE TALKING.
COULD I HAVE BEEN DREAMING?
SFX. BLAH BLAH BLAH
COULD HE HAVE INVITED FRIENDS OVER AT THIS HOUR?
SFX. BLAH BLAH BLAH
THE VOICES ARE COMING FROM FUTOSHI'S STUDY.


SFX: BLAH BLAH BLAH
WHAT'S WRONG?
SFX: PLOP
SFX: KYAAA!
SFX: HA HA HA HA
DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH.
WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
THOSE SK... SKULLS...
WHAT'S ALL THE COMMOTION ABOUT?


SURELY YOU WERE ASLEEP AND DREAMED IT.
I DON'T SEE THEM DOING ANYTHING.
HOW WEIRD.
I GET THE FEELING THAT THEY'RE PUTTING A CURSE ON US.
AT ANY RATE THEY GIVE ME THE CREEPS. WHY DON'T YOU RETURN THEM TO THEIR GRAVE?
THESE ARE NOTHING BUT SOME LIFELESS OBJECTS
IT'S FUNNY THAT AN EDUCATED PERSON LIKE YOU SAYS SUCH THINGS.
SFX HA HA HA HA


....?
WHAT YOU HEARD IS ONLY THE PRODUCT OF YOUR IMAGINATION
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE THAT THEY'VE STARTED TO TALK.
THEY'RE NO MORE THAN SIMPLE LUMPS OF LIMESTONE.
HA, HA, HA. OW, MY SIDES.
HOW STRANGE.
NO.
IF I STAY HERE TWIDDLING MY THUMBS, I WON'T BE ABLE TO TAKE THE GIFT TO TOKYO
DIDN'T A PACKAGE ARRIVE FROM YAMAKIYA?
THE NEXT DAY...

SFX: YAMAKIYA STORES/WINTER SALES
山木屋特別奉仕品
ウインターセール
WHILE HE WAS WALKING, THE BOY DIDN'T NOTICE THAT HIS BODY WASN'T PROJECTING ANY SHADOW. WHAT MYSTERIOUS CAUSE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS PHENOMENON?
I'LL HAVE TO GO PICK UP THE BOX MYSELF.
THERE AREN'T AS MANY PEOPLE TODAY.
SECOND FLOOR, FOLKS.
GOOOING UP.
SFX: SLAM
NEXT STOP: FIFTH FLOOR.
ガチャン
YES, I'M GETTING OFF.
WE'RE AT THE THIRD FLOOR...

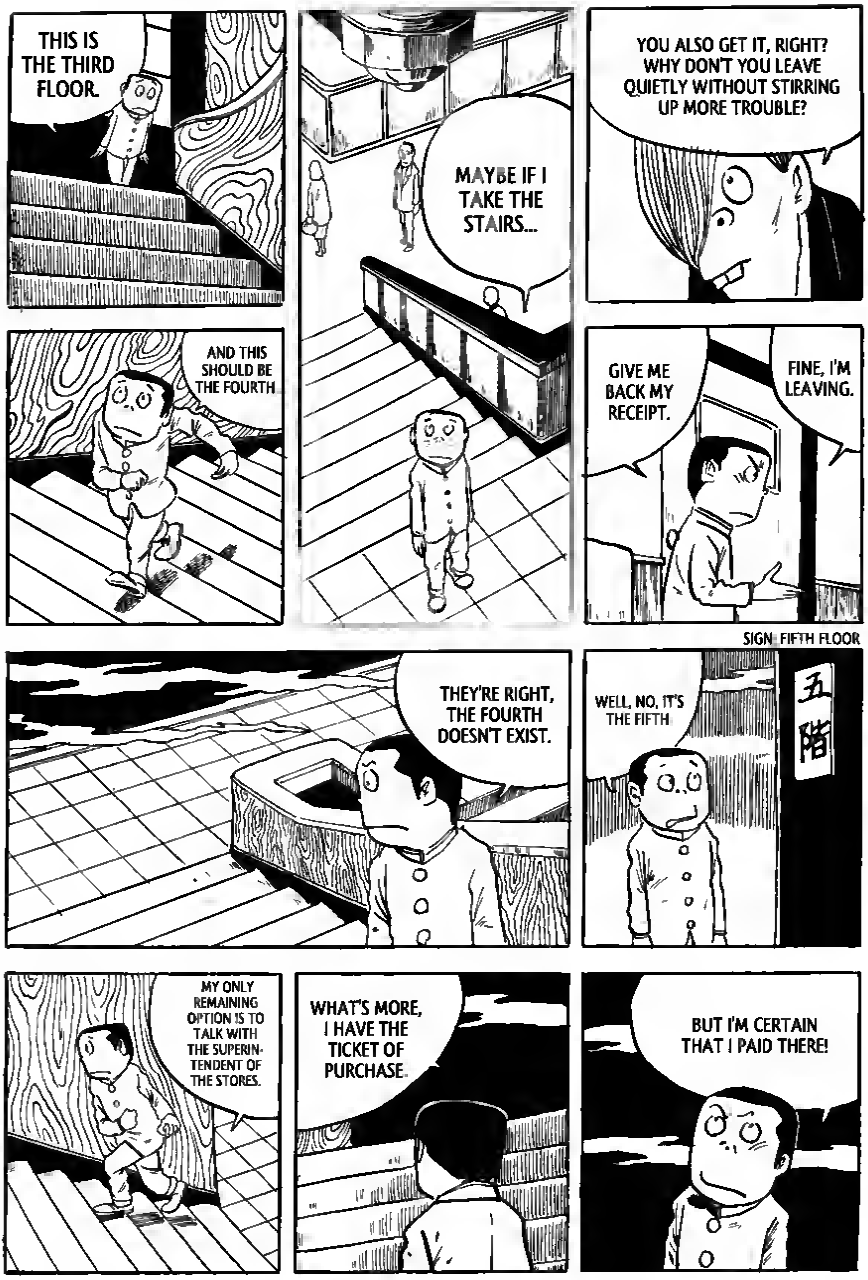

THE FOURTH?
I WANT TO GO TO THE FOURTH FLOOR.
HANG ON!
T/N *BOTH WORDS ARE PRONOUNCED AS "SHI" IN JAPANESE AND FOR THAT REASON MANY PEOPLE CONSIDER THE NUMBER FOUR TO BE A BAD OMEN.
IN THESE STORES WE CALL THE FLOOR THAT'S ABOVE THE "THIRD" FLOOR THE "FIFTH." IT'S 'CAUSE OF THE SUPERSTITION... YOU KNOW, THE NUMBER "FOUR" IS PRONOUNCED LIKE "DEATH."*
ARE YOU POKING FUN AT ME?
WE DON'T HAVE A FOURTH FLOOR IN YAMAKIYA.
WAIT!
AH, THEN I GET OUT HERE.
SO YOU SEE, EVEN IF WE SAY FIFTH FLOOR, IT'S EQUIVALENT TO THE FOURTH
THIRD FLOOOR.
SFX. GROOOAN
THEN IT'S PROBABLY THE THIRD.
THIS ISN'T THE DEPARTMENT I WENT TO YESTERDAY.

AND I REPEAT TO YOU THAT THAT FLOOR DOESN'T EXIST.
I'M TELLING YOU THAT IT WAS THE FOURTH.
THIS ISN'T IT EITHER.
ON THE SIXTH FLOOR. IN THE TOY STORE SECTION.
WHERE IS IT?
THE SECTION OF WRAPPINGS AND BOXES...
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME PLEASE GO TO THE INFORMATION DESK, ON THE GROUND FLOOR.
LOOK AT MY RECEIPT.
BUT I SWEAR I WAS THERE YESTERDAY.
IT ISN'T ON THE FOURTH?
YEEEP... IN THE DEPARTMENT ON THE FOURTH FLOOR.
.. THAT YOU MADE THIS PURCHASE YESTERDAY?
AND YOU SAY...?

WHAT'S UP?
MR ITO! COME HERE, PLEASE!
YES, AND I STILL HAVEN'T RECEIVED MY PACKAGE, SO...
ARE YOU CERTAIN THAT YOU CAME SHOPPING YESTERDAY?
UM.
LOOK AT THIS.
OFFICE
WOULD YOU BE SO KIND AS TO COME WITH ME?
UNDERSTOOD.
THE GENTLEMAN HERE...
BOSS, WE'VE GOT A SMALL PROBLEM.

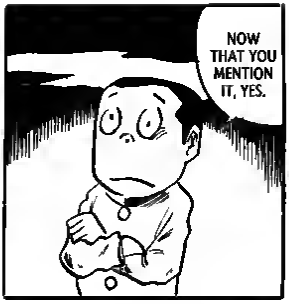
THE SALES-WOMAN MUST HAVE BEEN CONFUSED. I MADE THE PURCHASE YESTERDAY.
JANUARY 10TH, 1964... IT'S CERTAINLY ANCIENT!
WHAT?
HAS SHOWN UP WITH AN OLD VOUCHER FROM MANY YEARS AGO.
THEN, WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT?
I'M NOT ASKING FOR MONEY!
BUT WE CAN'T REFUND YOU ANY MONEY WITH THIS.
I ONLY ASK THAT YOU TAKE ME TO THE FOURTH FLOOR.
WE'RE THE SECURITY TEAM.
I GET IT.. YOU GUYS ARE THE MUSCLES OF THIS ESTABLISHMENT.
YOU'VE GOT A FEW SCREWS LOOSE.
HOWEVER... I'M SURE I WAS THERE YESTERDAY!
YEAH, THEY'VE TOLD ME THAT A THOUSAND TIMES.
YOU'RE REALLY STUBBORN. HOW MANY TIMES HAVE THEY TOLD YOU THAT IT DOESN'T EXIST?

THAT WOULD MEAN THAT HE WAS IN THE BLOCK OF CEMENT THAT SEPARATES THE THIRD AND FIFTH FLOORS.
LET'S SUPPOSE THAT THE BOY'S TELLING THE TRUTH.
HOLD ON A SECOND.
INSIDE THE CEMENT?
DON'T YOU THINK SO, BOSS?
...THERE'S ANOTHER DIMENSION UNKNOWN TO US, LOCATED INSIDE THE CEMENT.
IT COULD BE THAT...
HOWEVER, THAT IS SOMETHING THAT HUMANS CAN NEITHER PERCEIVE NOR UNDERSTAND.
BUT WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO ME ABOUT SPIRITS? PERHAPS THEY CAN ENTER AND LEAVE IT FREELY.
NOT LIVING BEINGS, OF COURSE.
NOBODY CAN GET IN THERE.
OUR JOB IS TO THINK OF A WAY TO RID OURSELVES OF HIM.
STOP CONVOLUTING THINGS WITH STUPID STORIES.
WELL THEN... ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT THIS GUY'S A SPIRIT THAT WENT INTO A CEMENT BLOCK?

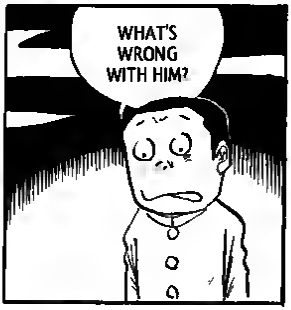

THIS IS THE THIRD FLOOR.
MAYBE IF I TAKE THE STAIRS...
YOU ALSO GET IT, RIGHT? WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE QUIETLY WITHOUT STIRRING UP MORE TROUBLE?
AND THIS SHOULD BE THE FOURTH
GIVE ME BACK MY RECEIPT.
FINE, I'M LEAVING.
SIGN: FIFTH FLOOR
THEY'RE RIGHT, THE FOURTH DOESN'T EXIST.
WELL, NO, IT'S THE FIFTH
五階
MY ONLY REMAINING OPTION IS TO TALK WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE STORES.
WHAT'S MORE, I HAVE THE TICKET OF PURCHASE.
BUT I'M CERTAIN THAT I PAID THERE!

...WHAT?
SIR, THIS CUSTOMER INSISTS ON SEEING YOU AT ALL COSTS. HE SAYS THAT BLAH BLAH BLAH...
AND FOR SUCH A TRIFLING MATTER HE WANTS TO SPEAK WITH ME? THIS BOY'S A BOLD ONE.
DID YOU JUST SAY THE FOURTH FLOOR?
FOURTH!?
YOU SEE, THERE'S NO FOURTH FLOOR, WHEN I'M SURE I WAS SHOPPING THERE.
SO THIS IS THE OLD TICKET...
I'M ALSO KEEPING THE SALES SLIP.
EXACTLY.

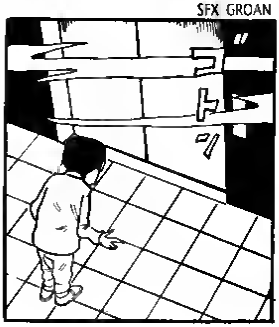
SFX: BRRRR
WHAT WAS THE SALESLADY'S NAME?
フルフル
JANUARY 10TH, 1964...?!
JANUARY 10TH...
WAS SHE ALONE?
MICHIKO YAMAKI?!
...SAID MICHIKO YAMAKI.
WELL I THINK I REMEMBER THAT THE RIBBON ON HER CHEST...
WITH THIN EYEBROWS?
TALL, ABOUT 27 OR 28 YEARS OLD.
WHAT WAS HE LIKE?
NO, THERE WAS ANOTHER CLERK.

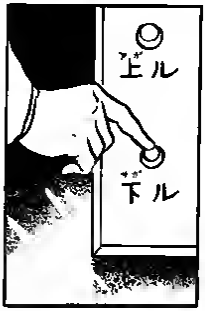


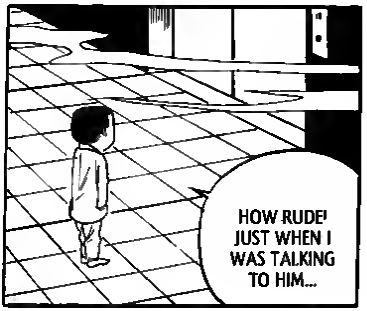
SFX. WHUMP

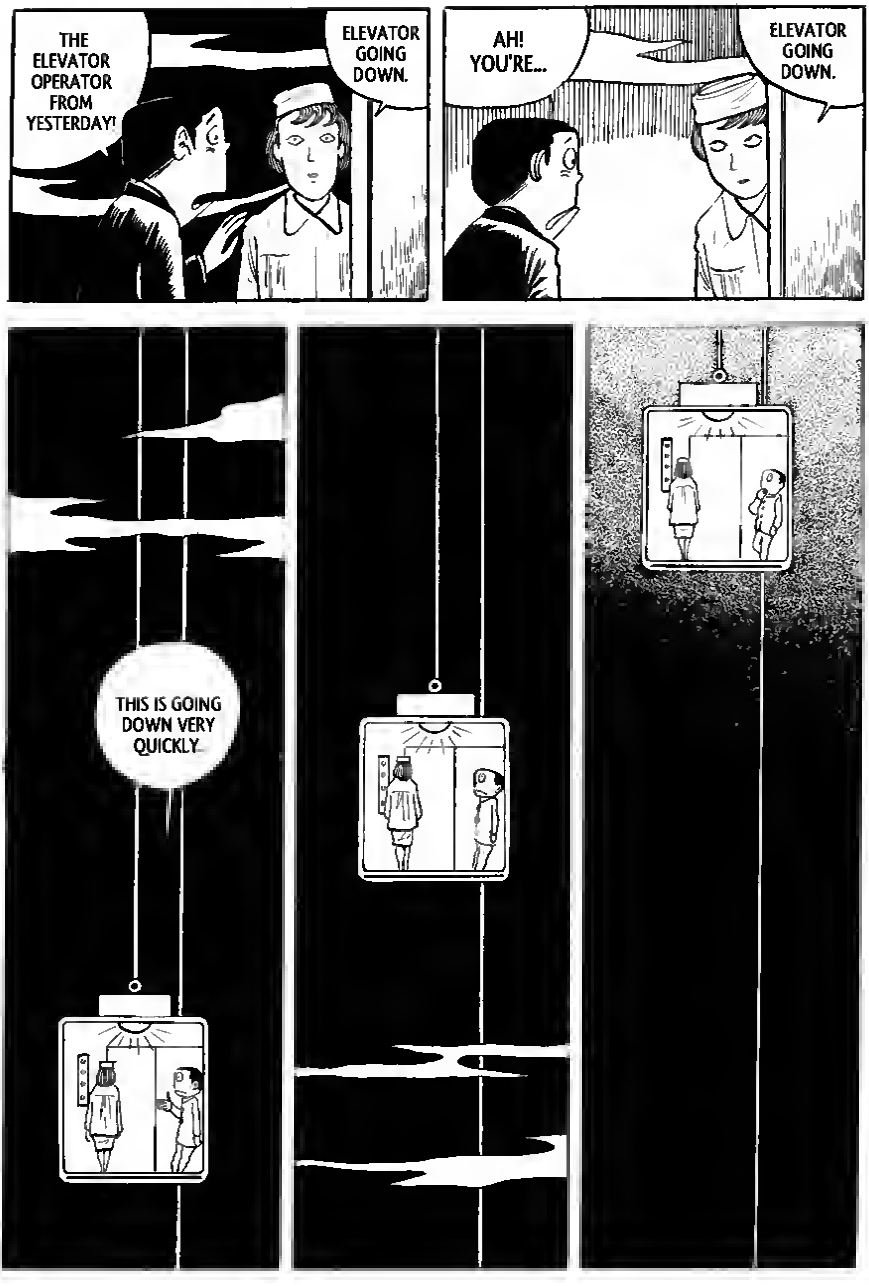


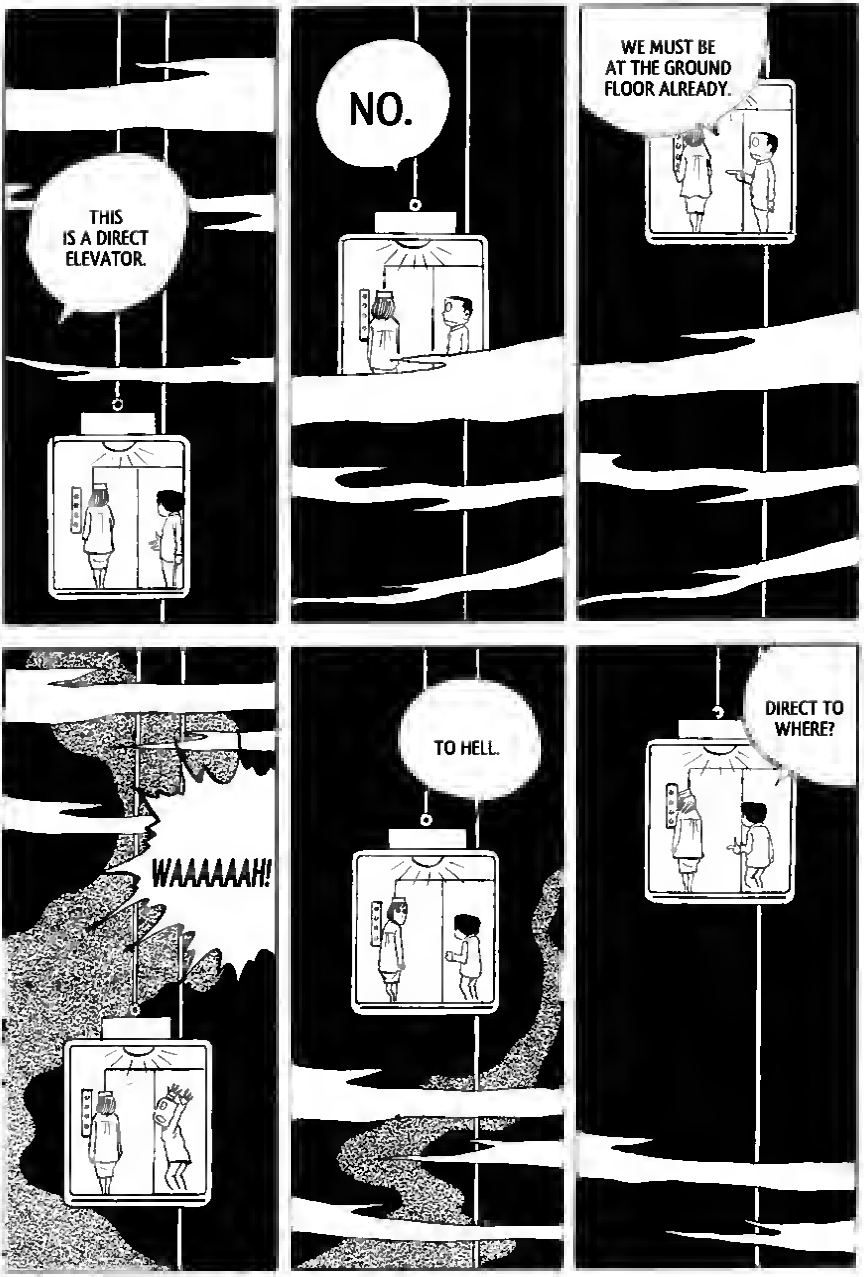
SFX GROAN

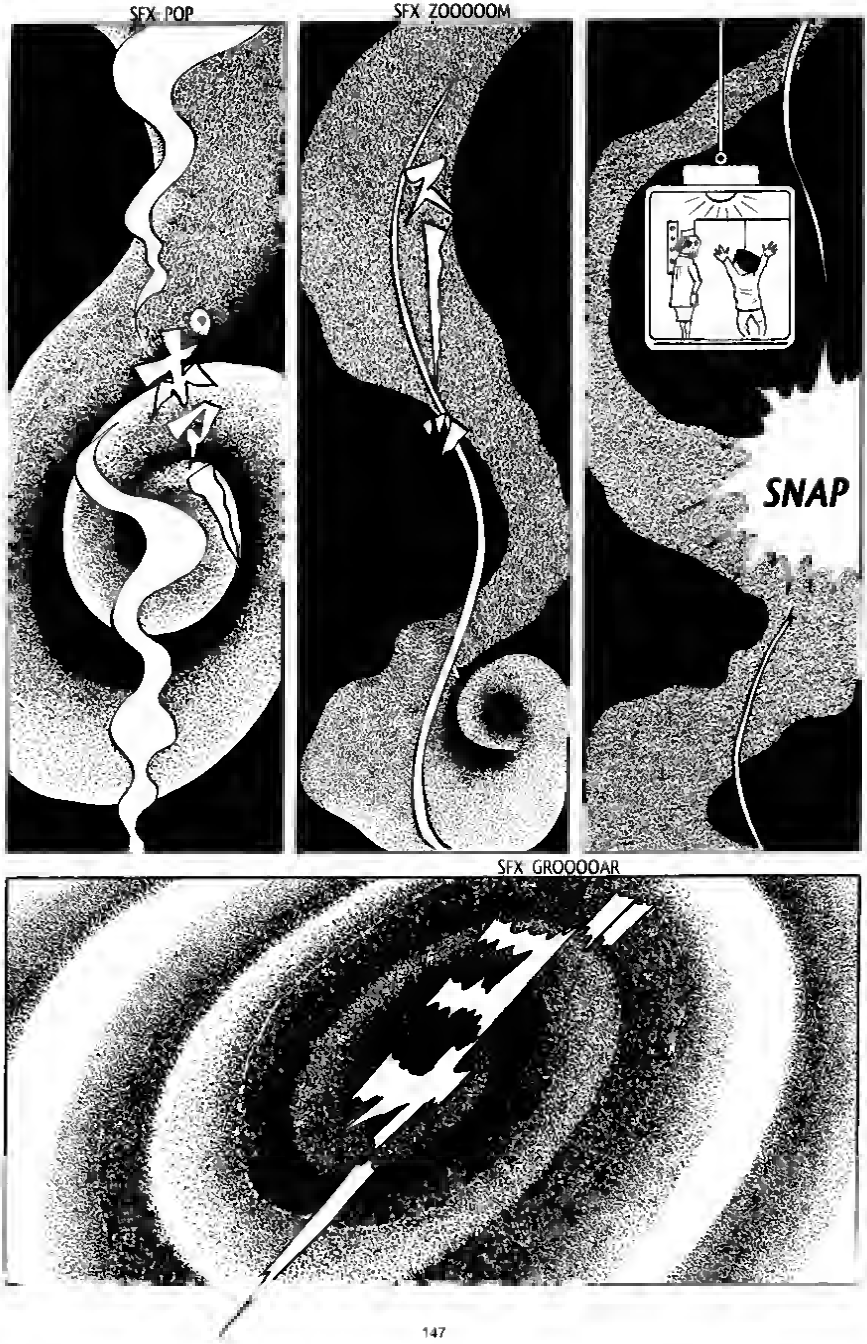







THE ELEVATOR OPERATOR FROM YESTERDAY!
ELEVATOR GOING DOWN.
AH! YOU'RE...
ELEVATOR GOING DOWN.
THIS IS GOING DOWN VERY QUICKLY...


THIS IS A DIRECT ELEVATOR.
NO.
WE MUST BE AT THE GROUND FLOOR ALREADY.
WAAAAAAH!
TO HELL.
DIRECT TO WHERE?


SFX: POP
SFX ZOOOOOM
SNAP
SFX GROOOOAR

ARTICLE PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 11TH IN MAJASA DAILY NEWS.

TEEN DIES WHEN AN ELEVATOR CRASHES.

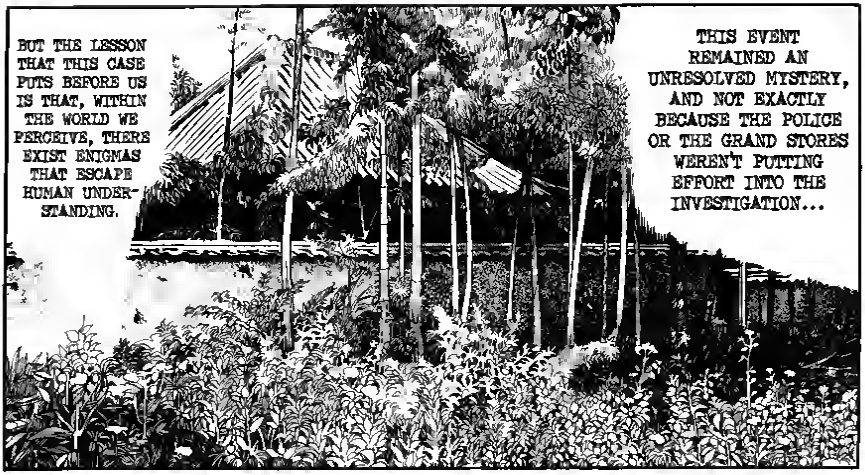
ON THE 10TH, YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, FUTOSHI UEKI (13 YEARS OLD) DIED IN THE YAMAKI GRAND DEPARTMENT STORES WHEN THE ELEVATOR HE WAS IN FELL. ACCORDING TO THE INQUIRY, THE ELEVATOR HAD BEEN OUT OF SERVICE FOR FOURTEEN YEARS AND WAS SEALED OFF.

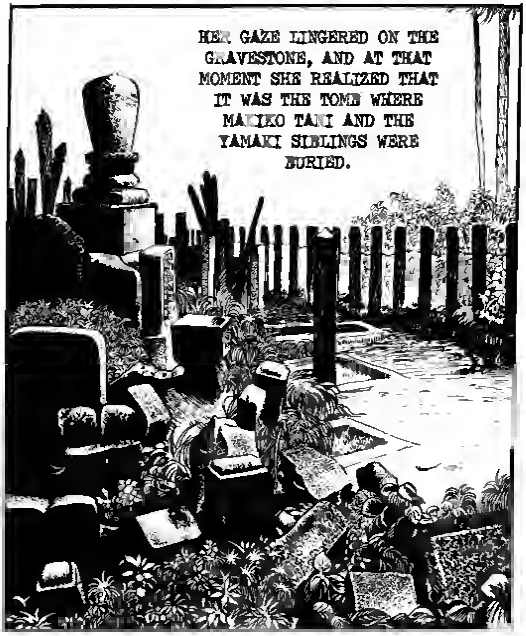
COINCIDENTALLY, THIS SAME ELEVATOR SUFFERED A SIMILAR ACCIDENT EXACTLY FOURTEEN YEARS AGO, ALSO ON JANUARY 10TH, IN WHICH THREE PEOPLE LOST THEIR LIVES. SINCE THEN ITS USE WAS PROHIBITED.

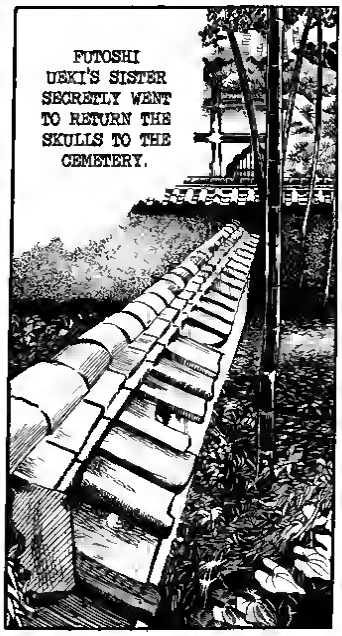
THE DECEASED IN THAT ACCIDENT WERE THE CHILDREN OF THE GENERAL MANAGER OF THE STORES, ICHIO AND MICHIKO YAMAKI, WHO WERE UNDERGOING TRAINING IN THE BUSINESS, AND THE ELEVATOR OPERATOR MAKIKO TANI.

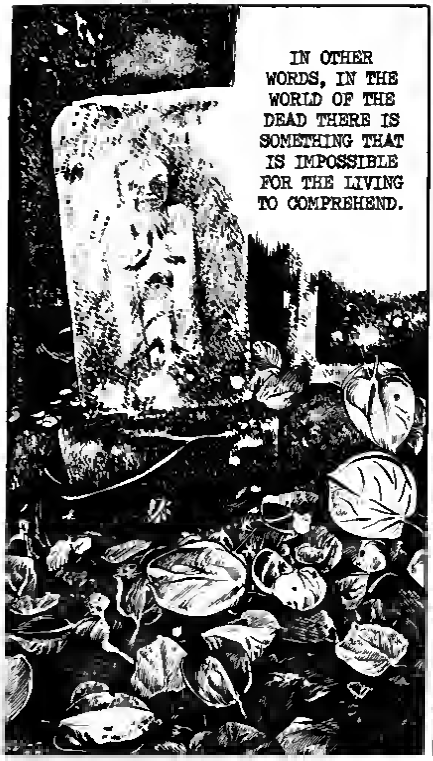
AFTER THE ACCIDENT, THE GENERAL MANAGER ORDERED THE ELEVATOR TO BE SEALED OFF. THE POLICE AND THE STORES ARE TRYING TO DETERMINE THE REASON THAT LED YOUNG UEKI TO ENTER THE ELEVATOR.

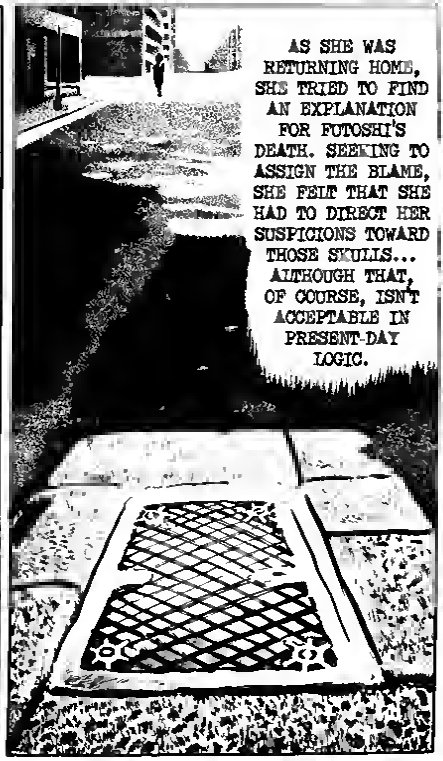
POST SCRIPT (EPILOGUE)


BUT THE LESSON THAT THIS CASE PUTS BEFORE US IS THAT, WITHIN THE WORLD WE PERCEIVE, THERE EXIST ENIGMAS THAT ESCAPE HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.
THIS EVENT REMAINED AN UNRESOLVED MYSTERY, AND NOT EXACTLY BECAUSE THE POLICE OR THE GRAND STORES WEREN'T PUTTING EFFORT INTO THE INVESTIGATION...

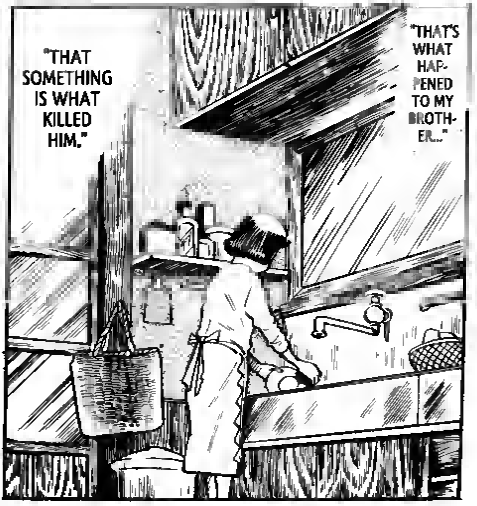

HER GAZE LINGERED ON THE GRAVESTONE, AND AT THAT MOMENT SHE REALIZED THAT IT WAS THE TOMB WHERE MARIKO TANI AND THE YAMAKI SIBLINGS WERE BURIED.



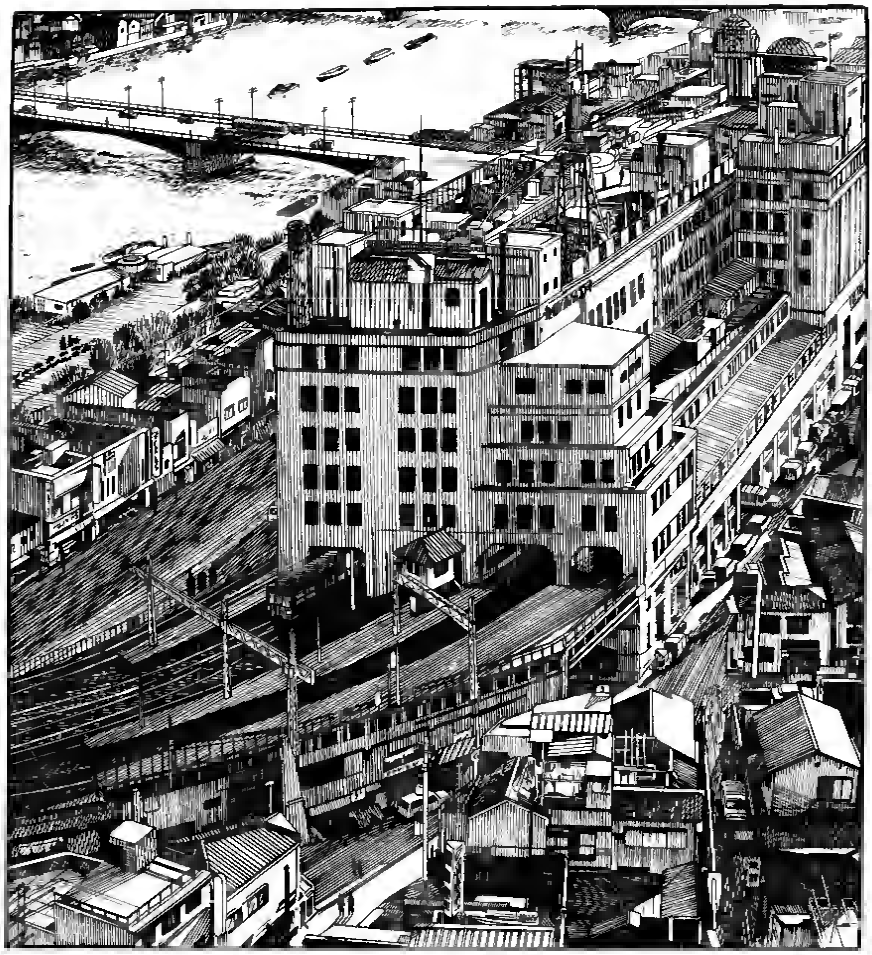

IN OTHER WORDS, IN THE WORLD OF THE DEAD THERE IS SOMETHING THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE LIVING TO COMPREHEND.


AS SHE WAS RETURNING HOME, SHE TRIED TO FIND AN EXPLANATION FOR FUTOSHI'S DEATH. SEEKING TO ASSIGN THE BLAME, SHE FELT THAT SHE HAD TO DIRECT HER SUSPICIONS TOWARD THOSE SKULLS... ALTHOUGH THAT, OF COURSE, ISN'T ACCEPTABLE IN PRESENT-DAY LOGIC.

WAS HER CONCLUSION.

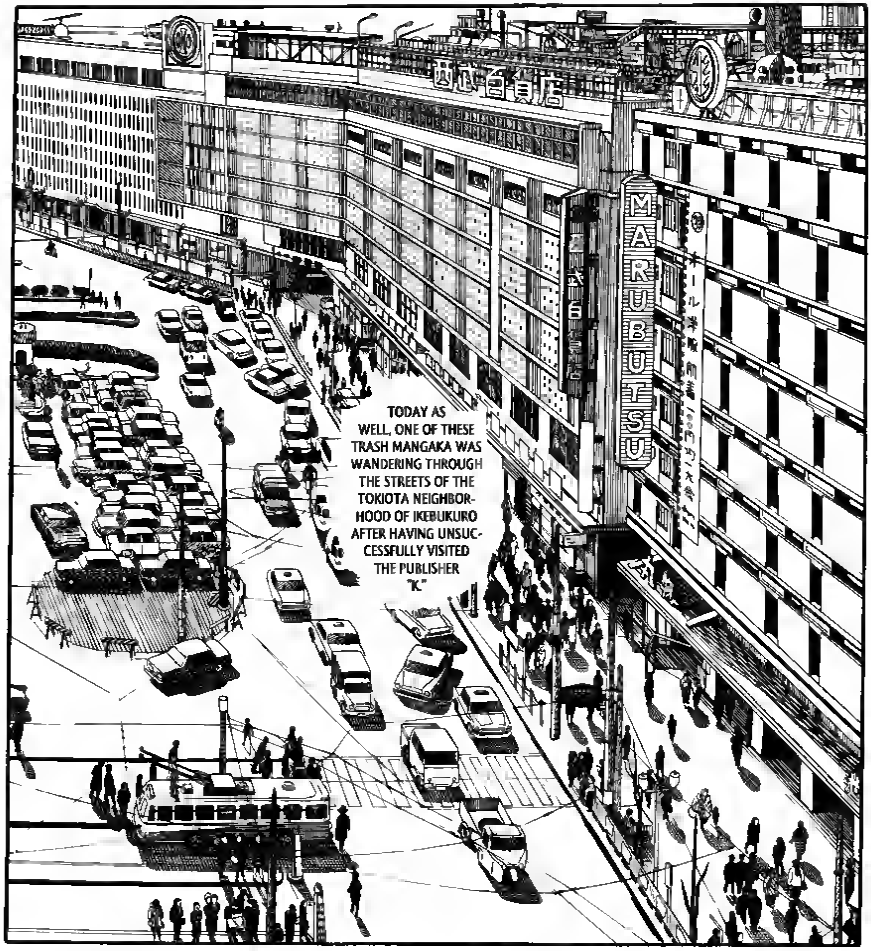

"THAT SOMETHING IS WHAT KILLED HIM."
"THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO MY BROTHER..."

PRESENTED BY HAPPY SCANS

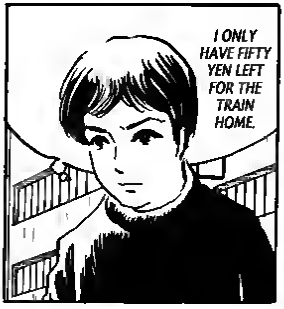


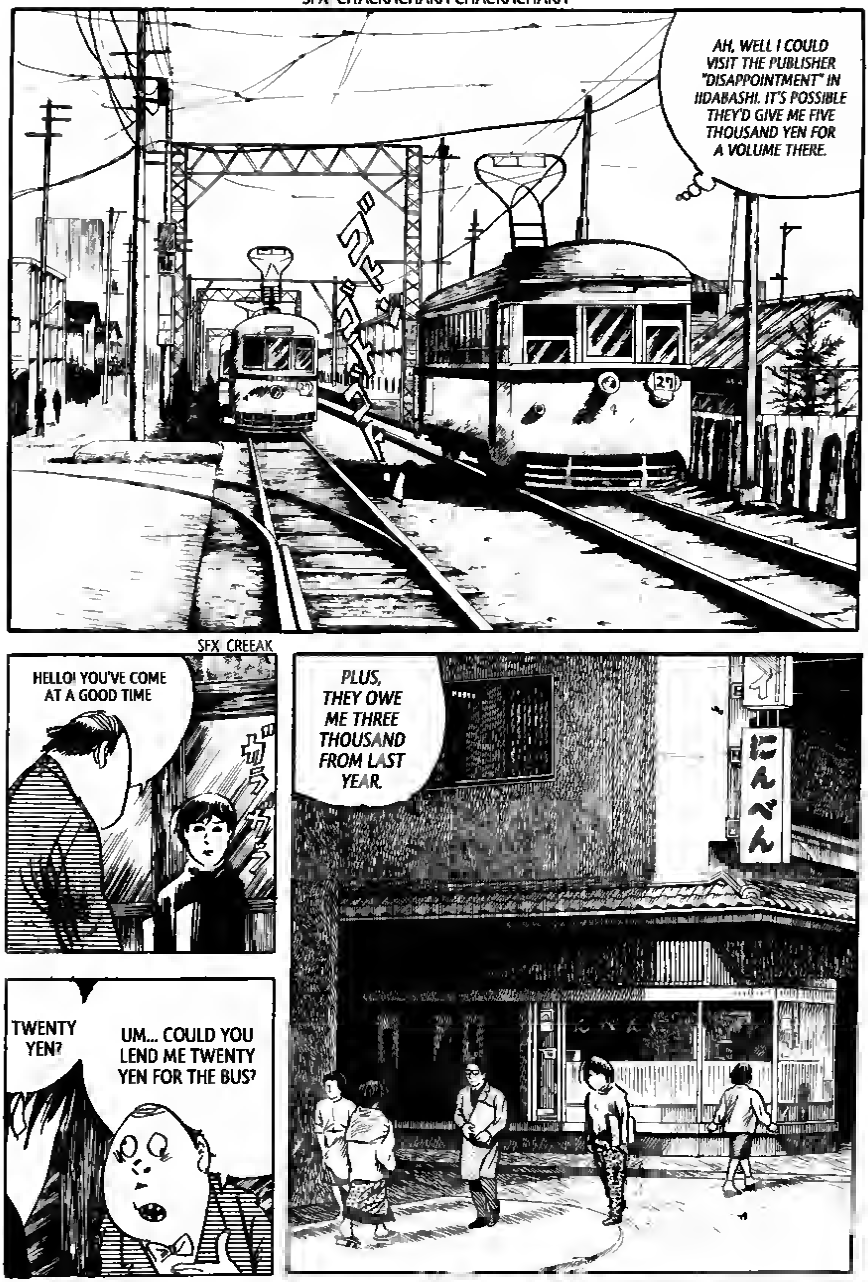
ALTHOUGH THEY MANAGED TO GET PUBLISHED, THEIR BOOKS JUST DIDN'T SELL. AND IN SOCIETY NOWADAYS THAT WHICH DOESN'T SELL, THAT IS TO SAY, ANYTHING THAT DOESN'T YIELD PROFITS, IS SYNONYMOUS WITH TRASH.

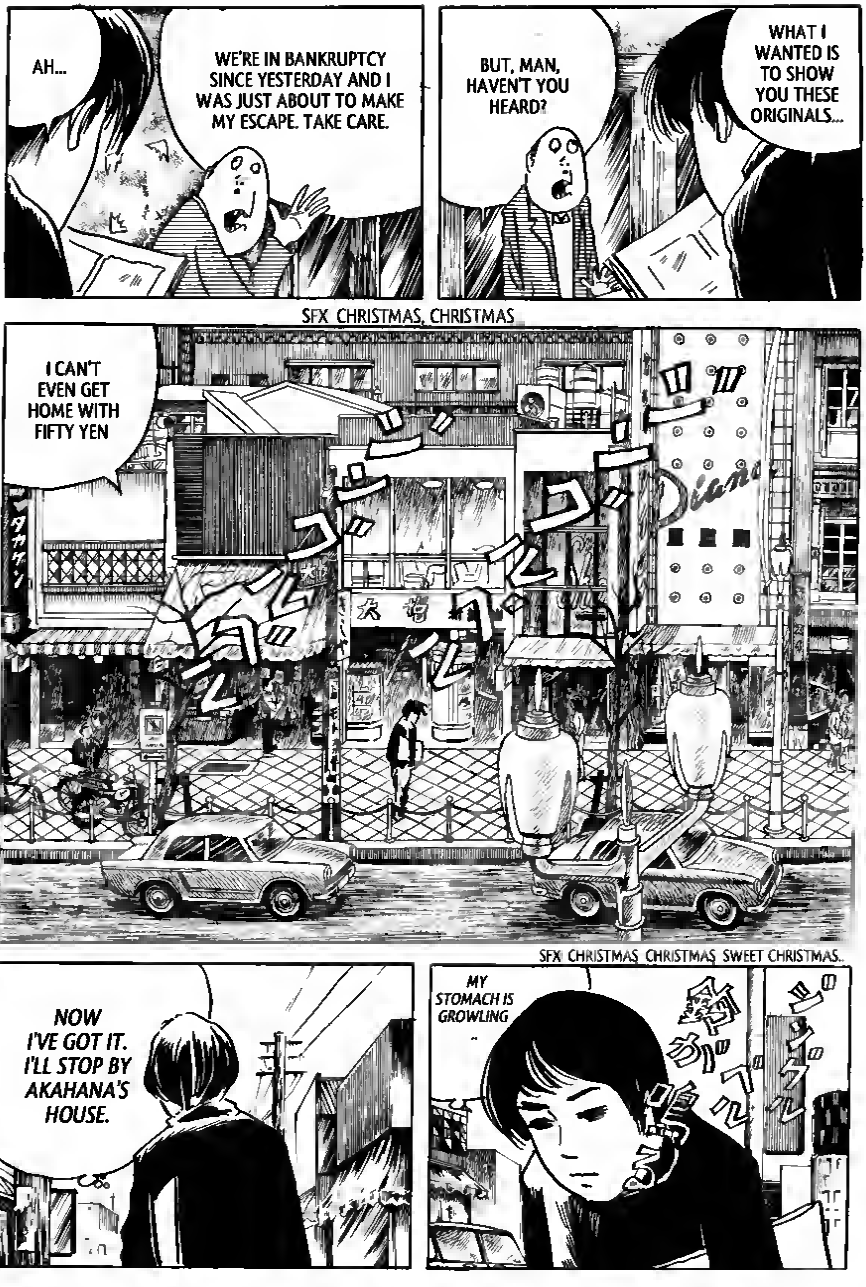
THAT MANGA IS FASHIONABLE NOW DOESN'T MEAN THAT ALL MANGAKA ARE SUCCESSFUL. THERE ARE THOSE WHO DON'T MANAGE TO SELL A THING, WITHOUT THAT NECESSARILY IMPLYING THAT THEY'RE MEDIOCRE.


MARUBUTSU
TODAY AS WELL, ONE OF THESE TRASH MANGAKA WAS WANDERING THROUGH THE STREETS OF THE TOKIOTA NEIGHBORHOOD OF IKEBUKURO AFTER HAVING UNSUCCESSFULLY VISITED THE PUBLISHER "K."

BUT EVEN IF I RETURNED I WOULDN'T HAVE ENOUGH TO PAY MY BACK RENT


I ONLY HAVE FIFTY YEN LEFT FOR THE TRAIN HOME.

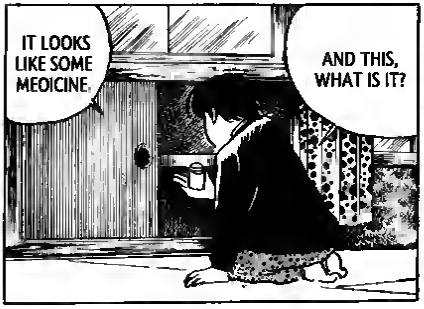

SFX: CHACKACHAKA CHACKACHAKA
AH, WELL I COULD VISIT THE PUBLISHER "DISAPPOINTMENT" IN IIDABASHI. IT'S POSSIBLE THEY'D GIVE ME FIVE THOUSAND YEN FOR A VOLUME THERE.
SFX: CREEAK
HELLO! YOU'VE COME AT A GOOD TIME
PLUS, THEY OWE ME THREE THOUSAND FROM LAST YEAR.
にんべん
TWENTY YEN?
UM... COULD YOU LEND ME TWENTY YEN FOR THE BUS?

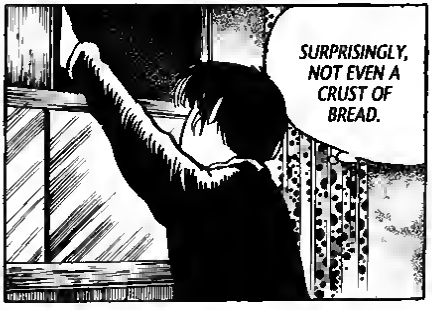

AH...
WE'RE IN BANKRUPTCY SINCE YESTERDAY AND I WAS JUST ABOUT TO MAKE MY ESCAPE. TAKE CARE.
BUT, MAN, HAVEN'T YOU HEARD?
WHAT I WANTED IS TO SHOW YOU THESE ORIGINALS...
SFX CHRISTMAS, CHRISTMAS
I CAN'T EVEN GET HOME WITH FIFTY YEN
SFX CHRISTMAS CHRISTMAS SWEET CHRISTMAS..
NOW I'VE GOT IT. I'LL STOP BY AKAHANA'S HOUSE.
MY STOMACH IS GROWLING

I'M SURE HE'LL OFFER ME SOME FOOD, AT LEAST...

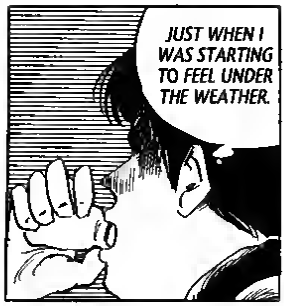
LET'S SEE IF I FIND SOMETHING TO EAT.

DAMN, HE ISN'T IN.
HEY, IT'S ME.


IT LOOKS LIKE SOME MEDICINE.
AND THIS, WHAT IS IT?

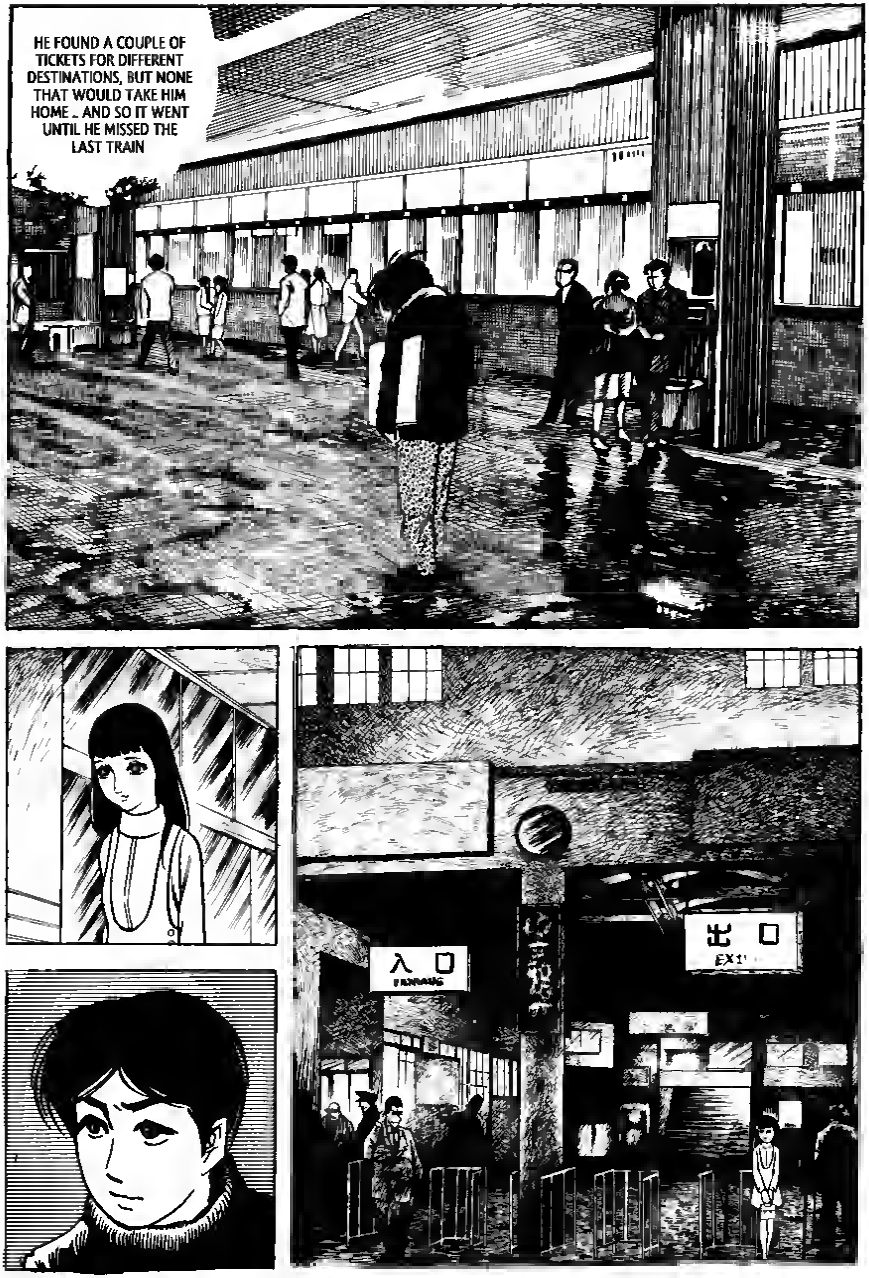

SURPRISINGLY, NOT EVEN A CRUST OF BREAD.

HOW CAN I MAKE IT HOME?


JUST WHEN I WAS STARTING TO FEEL UNDER THE WEATHER.

SFX: GULP
WHATEVER, AS LONG AS IT PUTS SOMETHING IN MY STOMACH.
ゴクリ

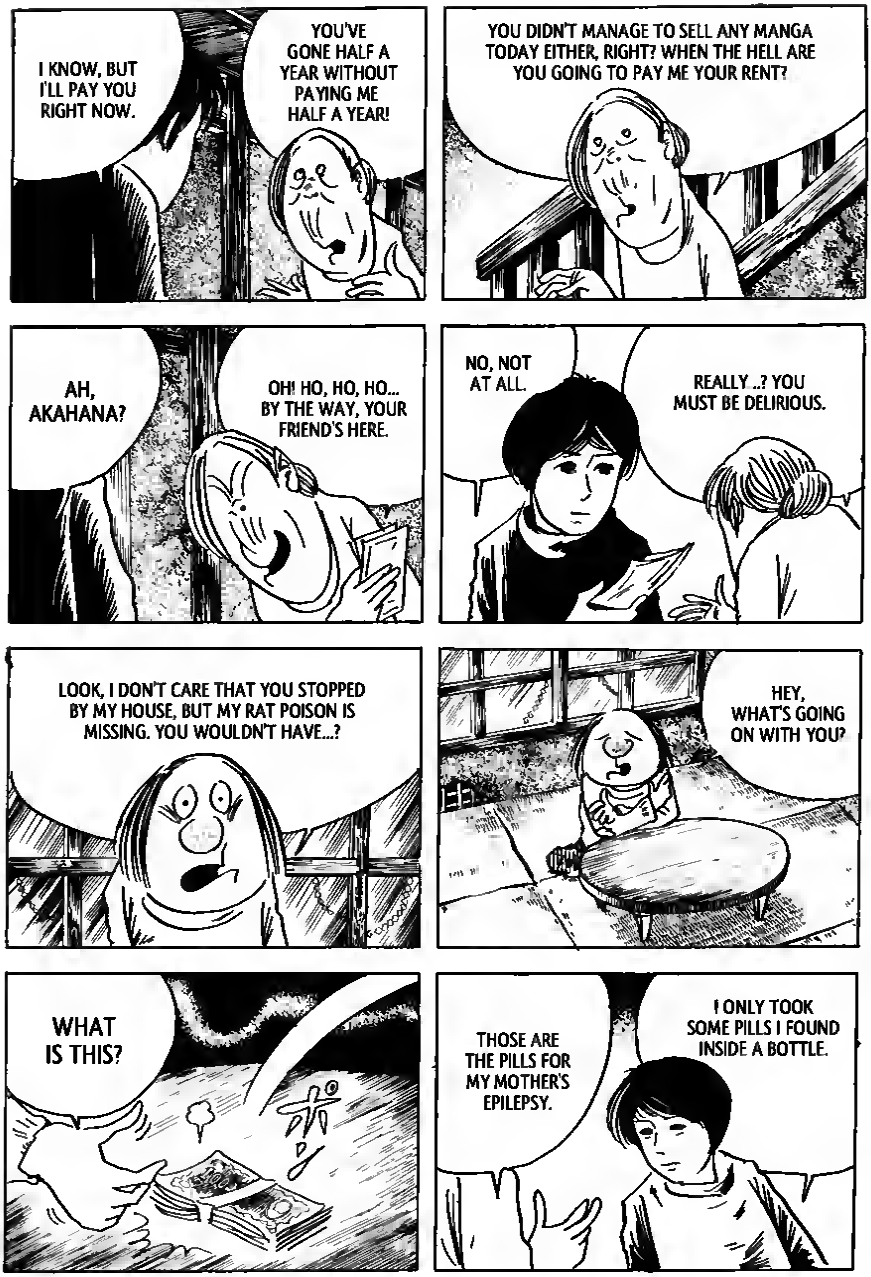
I'VE GOT IT. THERE'S ALWAYS SOME DISCARDED TICKETS AROUND THE STATION.


HE FOUND A COUPLE OF TICKETS FOR DIFFERENT DESTINATIONS, BUT NONE THAT WOULD TAKE HIM HOME .. AND SO IT WENT UNTIL HE MISSED THE LAST TRAIN
入口
ENTRANCE
出口
EXIT

CLEARLY.
YOU CAN SEE ME?
OH.
NO, NOTHING... MY HOUSE IS NEARBY, YOU COMING?
WHAT?
THAT'S WONDERFUL.
YES. IT'S RIGHT NEXTDOOR.
YOUR HOUSE?

YES, I ALREADY KNEW THAT.
YOU LIVE NEXT TO MY FRIEND AKAHANA.
HERE IT IS.
WELL, I'D NEVER SEEN YOU BEFORE...
YOU EVEN KNOW MY NAME.
I LIVE ON THE SECOND FLOOR.
COME IN, YAMAMOTO.
IT'S FOR THE TWO OF US.
AND ALL THIS FOOD?

I DON'T GET IT AT ALL.
ALTHOUGH YOU'VE JUST DISCOVERED MY PRESENCE TODAY, I KNOW YOU WELL.
YES.
YOU EVEN KNEW I WAS HUNGRY.
TAKE THIS.
YAMAMOTO DIDN'T EVEN LEAVE A CRUMB. WHEN HE WAS GETTING READY TO RETURN HOME ..
WELL, LET'S GO AHEAD AND EAT.
HOWEVER MUCH I EXPLAINED, YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT.
SEX CREEAK
HE TOOK A TAXI TO RETURN TO THE BOARDING HOUSE.
ソォ〜ガラ
YOU ALSO KNEW I NEEDED MONEY...
IT'S FOR YOUR MANGA RESEARCH.
SO DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHERE I LIVE...?
I'LL BE GOING TO VISIT YOU SOON AT YOUR BOARDING ROOM.

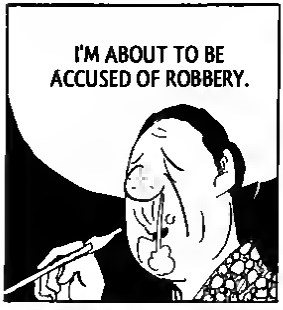

I KNOW, BUT I'LL PAY YOU RIGHT NOW.
YOU'VE GONE HALF A YEAR WITHOUT PAYING ME HALF A YEAR!
YOU DIDN'T MANAGE TO SELL ANY MANGA TODAY EITHER, RIGHT? WHEN THE HELL ARE YOU GOING TO PAY ME YOUR RENT?
AH, AKAHANA?
OH! HO, HO, HO... BY THE WAY, YOUR FRIEND'S HERE.
NO, NOT AT ALL.
REALLY ..? YOU MUST BE DELIRIOUS.
LOOK, I DON'T CARE THAT YOU STOPPED BY MY HOUSE, BUT MY RAT POISON IS MISSING. YOU WOULDN'T HAVE...?
HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON WITH YOU?
WHAT IS THIS?
THOSE ARE THE PILLS FOR MY MOTHER'S EPILEPSY.
I ONLY TOOK SOME PILLS I FOUND INSIDE A BOTTLE.

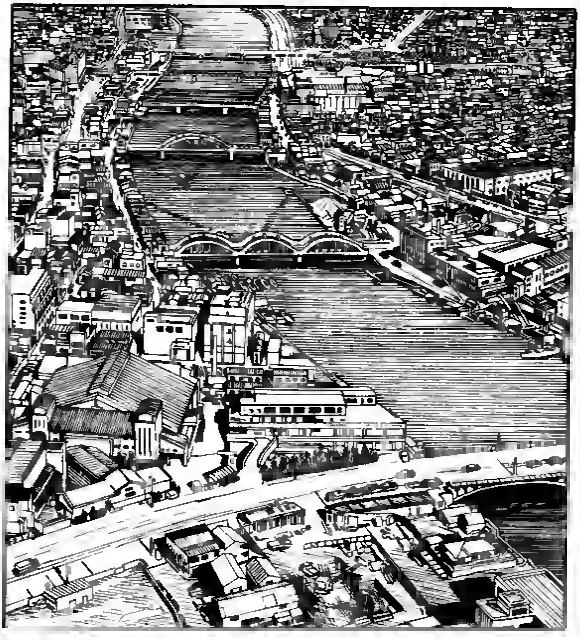
WHAT'S WRONG?
SFX: KYAAA!
SFX: PANT PANT
LOOK AT IT CLOSELY.
SFX: UGH
I KNOW THAT ALREADY.
IT'S MONEY!
SFX: UGH
BUT WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?
DO YOU THINK SHE'S A GODDESS?
WELL YOU SEE, BLAH BLAH BLAH...
I DON'T GET IT. WHAT HAPPENED?
I WANT TO ASK HER FOR MONEY, TOO.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
FOR REAL?
WHAT'S MORE, SHE'S YOUR NEIGHBOR.
LOVELY!?
TO TOP IT OFF, SHE WAS LOVELY.

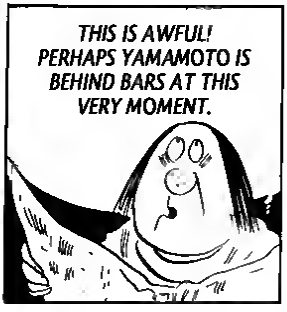
HOW ODD.
THE NEXT DAY, AKAHANA DECIDED TO GO TO MEET THAT GIRL, BUT THE HOUSE WAS EMPTY.
THANKS FOR HELPING ME ALL THE TIME.
YOU'RE GONNA GO JUST LIKE THAT? COME ON, TAKE THIS.
UNINHABITED?
NO, THIS HOUSE IS UNINHABITED.
DOES ANYONE LIVE THERE?
I HOPE THAT SHE HASN'T HIDDEN HERSELF UPON SEEING MY FACE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WHAT'S WRONG?
WHAT'S WRONG, MOTHER?
AKATA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE?

THE MONEY!

THE SERIAL NUMBERS MATCH THOSE FROM THE BILLS YAMAMOTO GAVE YOU.
READ THE NEWS. A MILLION YEN DISAPPEARED FROM THE BANK.


I'M ABOUT TO BE ACCUSED OF ROBBERY.



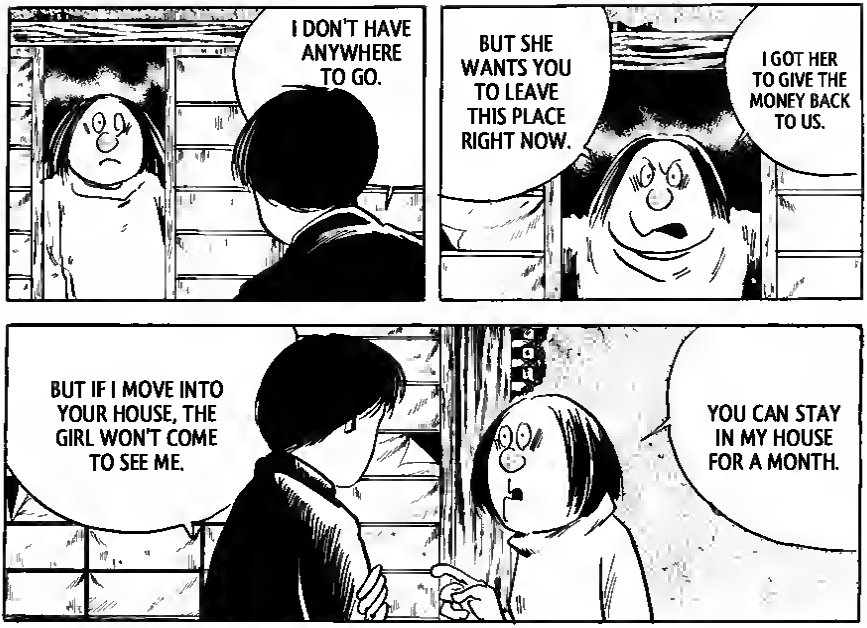

THIS IS AWFUL! PERHAPS YAMAMOTO IS BEHIND BARS AT THIS VERY MOMENT.

TO YAMA-MOTO'S PLACE.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

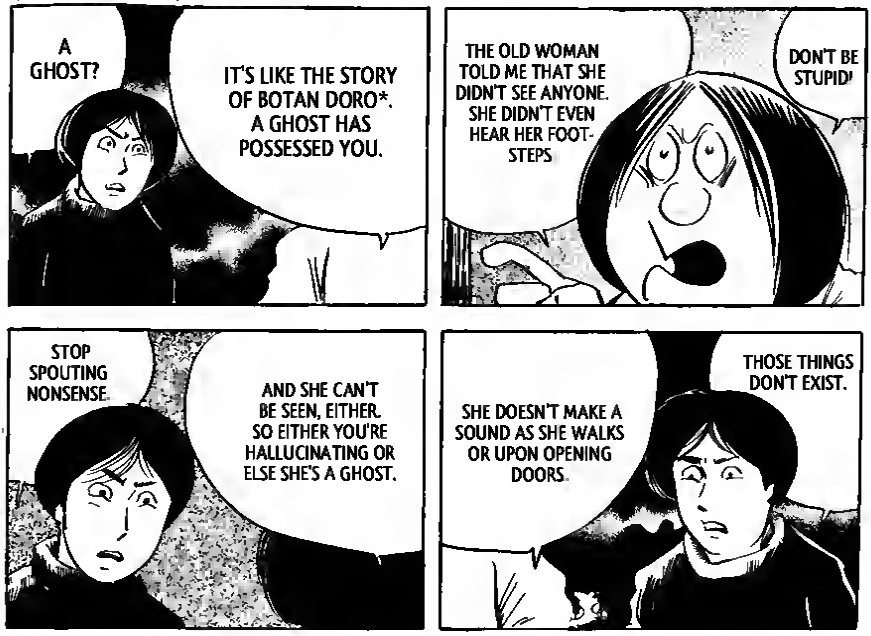
SFX. CREEEAK
HA, HA, HA.
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU? WHAT A RACKET.
HEY.
CRAZY WENCH? DON'T BE RUDE, YOU'RE IN THE PRESENCE OF A LADY.
DON'T GIVE ME THAT. THE MONEY YOU GAVE ME IS THE SAME THEY STOLE FROM THE BANK. I TOLD YOU TO BE CAREFUL WITH THAT CRAZY WENCH.
AKAHANA DIDN'T SEE A GIRL IN THE ROOM.
A LADY? HAVE YOU GONE INSANE?

I'D BETTER GO.
AKAHANA, YOU'RE GOING TOO FAR.
DON'T HANG OUT WITH WOMEN WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY COME FROM.
WHY ARE YOU TALKING TO YOURSELF?
AKAHANA STILL COULDN'T SEE HER, OR HEAR HER VOICE.
OK, BUT COME BACK SOON.
DON'T MESS WITH ME WHEN I'M SPEAKING SERIOUSLY WITH YOU.
STOP FOOLING AROUND.
THIS IS MY FRIEND AKAHANA. HE'S A BIT VULGAR BUT HE'S A GOOD GUY. DON'T MIND HIM.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN NOBODY'S HERE? ASK THE OLD WOMAN FROM THE BOARDING HOUSE ..
ABOUT THERE BEING NOBODY HERE.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I'VE ONLY USED IT TO PAY THE OLD WOMAN WHAT I OWED HER.
WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS WHAT YOU'VE DONE WITH THAT MONEY.
WELL, LET'S SET THIS MATTER ASIDE FOR LATER.
SHE SAW THE GIRL AS SHE CAME IN.
SUCH A PRETTY WOMAN COULDN'T COMMIT SUCH A CRIME.
OH...
WAIT!
I'M GOING TO GET IT BACK.
IDIOT!
HEY, THE OLD WOMAN STILL DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE ROBBERY.


I DON'T HAVE ANYWHERE TO GO.
BUT SHE WANTS YOU TO LEAVE THIS PLACE RIGHT NOW.
I GOT HER TO GIVE THE MONEY BACK TO US.
BUT IF I MOVE INTO YOUR HOUSE, THE GIRL WON'T COME TO SEE ME.
YOU CAN STAY IN MY HOUSE FOR A MONTH.

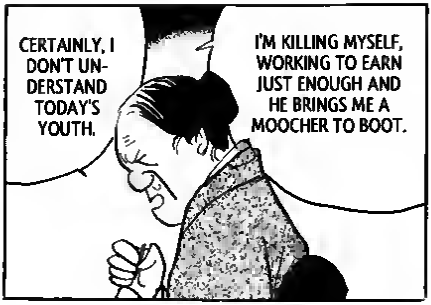
T/N *BOTAN DORO: A POPULAR JAPANESE GHOST STORY INSPIRED BY A CHINESE LEGEND

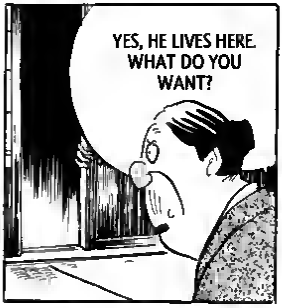

A GHOST?
IT'S LIKE THE STORY OF BOTAN DORO*. A GHOST HAS POSSESSED YOU.
THE OLD WOMAN TOLD ME THAT SHE DIDN'T SEE ANYONE. SHE DIDN'T EVEN HEAR HER FOOT-STEPS.
DON'T BE STUPID!
STOP SPOUTING NONSENSE.
AND SHE CAN'T BE SEEN, EITHER. SO EITHER YOU'RE HALLUCINATING OR ELSE SHE'S A GHOST.
SHE DOESN'T MAKE A SOUND AS SHE WALKS OR UPON OPENING DOORS.
THOSE THINGS DON'T EXIST.

I DON'T WANT TO.
IN ANY CASE, TAKE MY AOVICE NOW ANO COME TO MY HOUSE.
SO MANY YEARS OF POVERTY HAVE AFFECTEO YOUR MINO.
DON'T GET WORKEO UP.
LOOK, THE OLD WOMAN CAME IN. LET'S BLOW THIS JOINT.
GET OUT IMMEOI-ATELY!
YOU HOPING TO STAY HERE?
WE'LL SEE. OR RATHER...
BUT...
THIS GUY DOESN'T UNDERSTAND ALL THAT I DO FOR HIM.

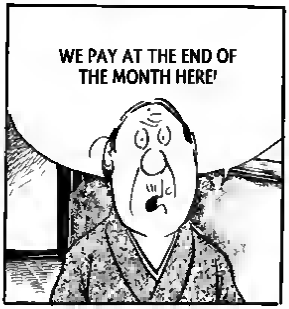
IT WILL ONLY BE FOR A LITTLE WHILE. IT'S A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH.
...ON TOP OF HIM STEALING MY MEDICINE, NOW YOU EXPECT US TO FEED HIM?
AND IF HE LIVES INSIDE MY CLOSET?
I COMPLETELY REFUSE.
NOT A CHANCE.
MOM, I'M BEGGING YOU. HE'S WAITING OUTSIDE.
MOM, WE'RE GOING TO GO OUT TO SELL HIS MANGA.
A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER.
THAT'S IF YOU CAN.

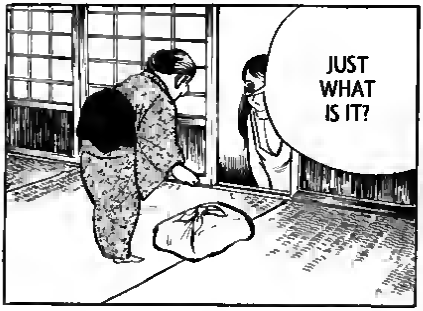
EXCUSE ME.

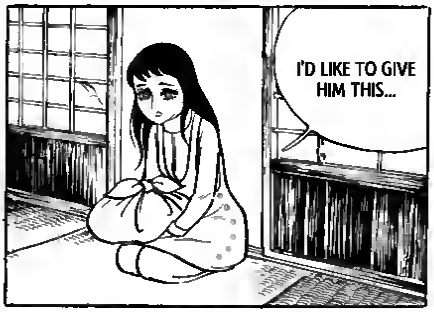

CERTAINLY, I DON'T UNDERSTAND TODAY'S YOUTH.
I'M KILLING MYSELF, WORKING TO EARN JUST ENOUGH AND HE BRINGS ME A MOOCHER TO BOOT.

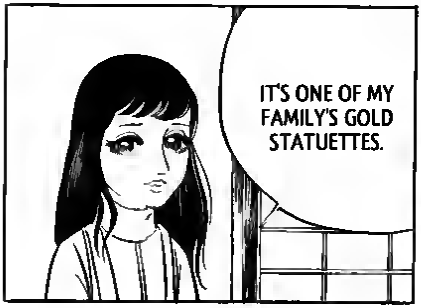

YES, HE LIVES HERE. WHAT DO YOU WANT?

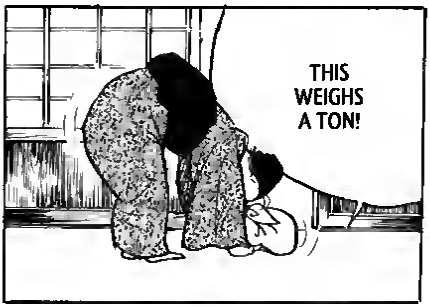
OH, NO. I'M LOOKING FOR YAMAMOTO.


WE PAY AT THE END OF THE MONTH HERE!


JUST WHAT IS IT?

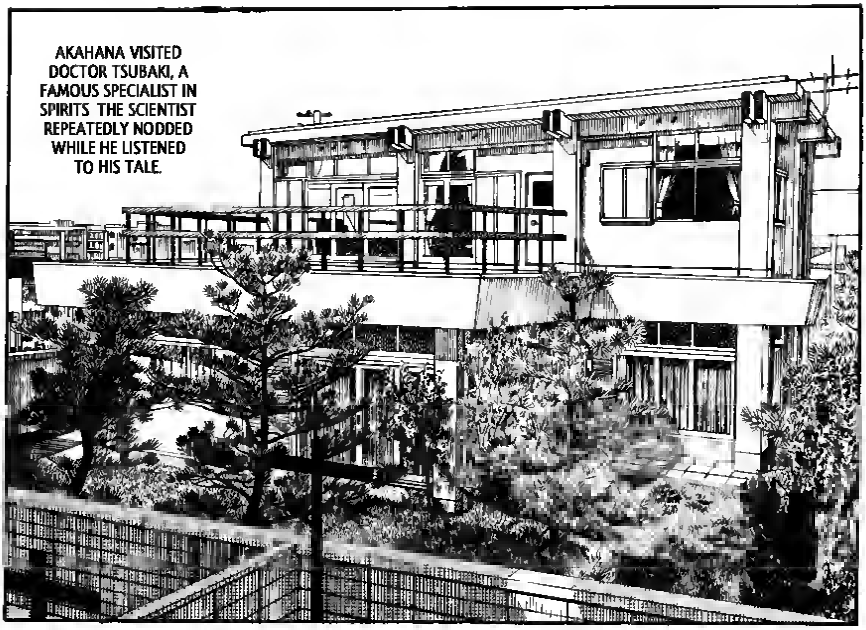

I'D LIKE TO GIVE HIM THIS...

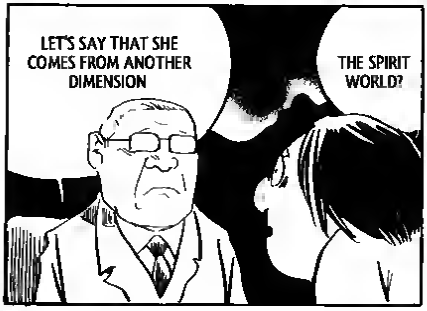

IT'S ONE OF MY FAMILY'S GOLD STATUETTES.

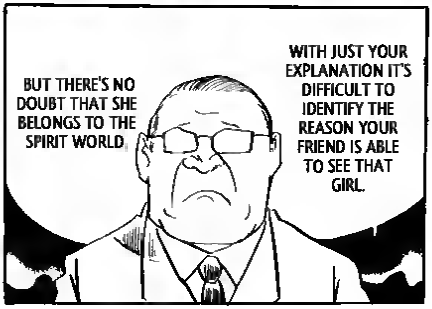

THIS WEIGHS A TON!

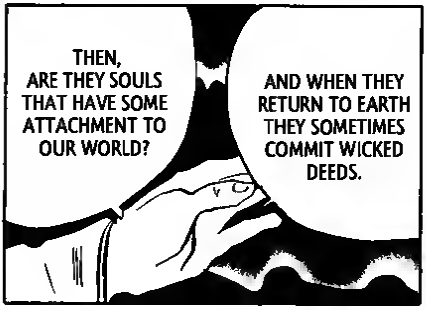
MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE IN OUR HUMBLE ABODE.
WELL, NOW THAT I'VE STARTED... THIS IS LIKE A FEATHER TO ME.
ふえっ
OH, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO.
IT'S MY CONTRIBUTION SO THAT YAMAMOTO CAN PAY FOR HIS RESEARCH.
MOM, DON'T BE FRIGHTENED BUT THAT GIRL IS A PHANTOM, I SAY A GHOST.
I TRIED TO STOP HER, BUT THE GIRL LEFT IMMEDIATELY.

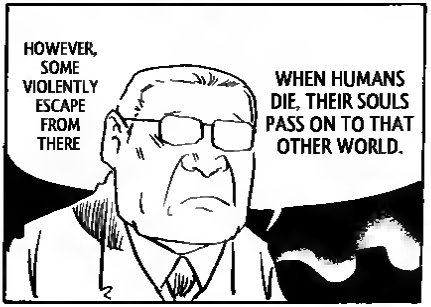
COULD A GHOST CARRY SOMETHING SO HEAVY?
HUPP!
IT COULD BE LIKE THAT AT ANY RATE, LET'S LOOK AT THE STATUETTE.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? PERHAPS SHE'S A GHOST OR WHATEVER, BUT SHE BRINGS US MONEY. TO ME SHE'S A GODDESS.
THAT AGAIN. HE DOESN'T YIELD AN INCH.
NO WAY. IT'S THE GIFT OF A PHANTOM.
WOW, IT'S IMPRESSIVE. YOU KEEP IT, MA'AM.
IT'S INCREDIBLE! YOU'RE BLINDED BY MONEY.
I'LL SHOW YOU THAT WE'RE DEALING WITH A PHANTOM.

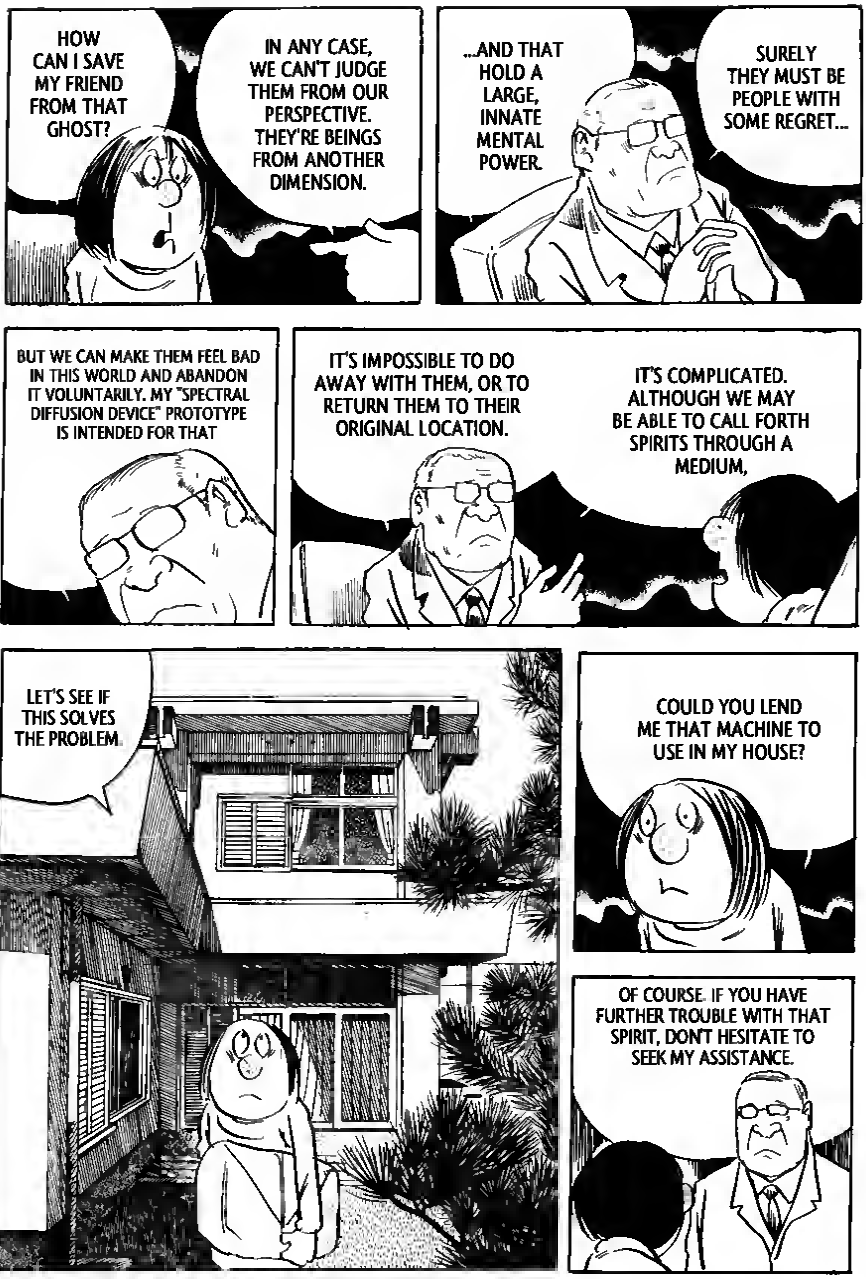

AKAHANA VISITED DOCTOR TSUBAKI, A FAMOUS SPECIALIST IN SPIRITS. THE SCIENTIST REPEATEDLY NODDED WHILE HE LISTENED TO HIS TALE.


LET'S SAY THAT SHE COMES FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION
THE SPIRIT WORLD?


BUT THERE'S NO DOUBT THAT SHE BELONGS TO THE SPIRIT WORLD.
WITH JUST YOUR EXPLANATION IT'S DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY THE REASON YOUR FRIEND IS ABLE TO SEE THAT GIRL.


THEN, ARE THEY SOULS THAT HAVE SOME ATTACHMENT TO OUR WORLD?
AND WHEN THEY RETURN TO EARTH THEY SOMETIMES COMMIT WICKED DEEDS.


HOWEVER, SOME VIOLENTLY ESCAPE FROM THERE
WHEN HUMANS DIE, THEIR SOULS PASS ON TO THAT OTHER WORLD.


HOW CAN I SAVE MY FRIEND FROM THAT GHOST?
IN ANY CASE, WE CAN'T JUDGE THEM FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE. THEY'RE BEINGS FROM ANOTHER DIMENSION.
...AND THAT HOLD A LARGE, INNATE MENTAL POWER.
SURELY THEY MUST BE PEOPLE WITH SOME REGRET...
BUT WE CAN MAKE THEM FEEL BAD IN THIS WORLD AND ABANDON IT VOLUNTARILY. MY "SPECTRAL DIFFUSION DEVICE" PROTOTYPE IS INTENDED FOR THAT
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO DO AWAY WITH THEM, OR TO RETURN THEM TO THEIR ORIGINAL LOCATION.
IT'S COMPLICATED. ALTHOUGH WE MAY BE ABLE TO CALL FORTH SPIRITS THROUGH A MEDIUM,
LET'S SEE IF THIS SOLVES THE PROBLEM.
COULD YOU LEND ME THAT MACHINE TO USE IN MY HOUSE?
OF COURSE. IF YOU HAVE FURTHER TROUBLE WITH THAT SPIRIT, DON'T HESITATE TO SEEK MY ASSISTANCE.

A GOLD STATUETTE HAS GONE MISSING.
A MYSTERIOUS ROBBERY.
WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
WHO KNOWS WHAT THAT GHOST IS GOING TO BRING NEXT TIME.
THEN THAT GIFT...
A STATUETTE OF GOLD!
SO, I HAVE TO TAKE THIS HOME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
SFX. KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
THE CRAZY ONE IS YOU, MOM. AND YAMAMOTO TOO.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? HAVE YOU GONE CRAZY?

DESPITE THE RELUCTANCE OF HIS MOTHER AND YAMAMOTO, AKAHANA CONVINCED THEM TO REMOVE THE STATUETTE FROM THEIR HOME. SOME DAYS LATER, THE MOTHER AND SON WENT TO VISIT THE FAMILY TOMB AND YAMAMOTO WAS LEFT EATING DINNER ALONE. AT THAT MOMENT THE GIRL APPEARED...

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE GOLD STATUETTE IS STOLEN?

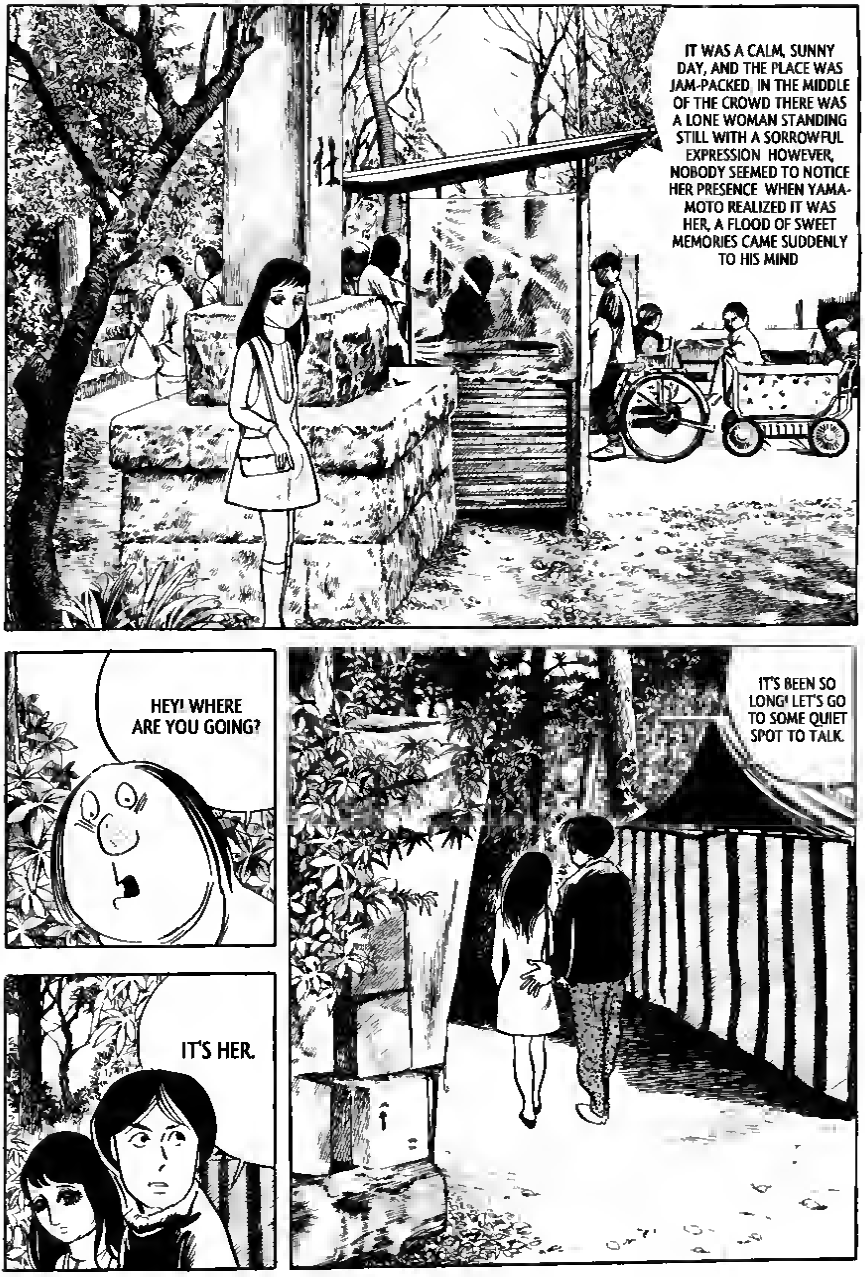
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IT, COME WITH ME. I'LL SHOW YOU THAT IT'S TRUE.

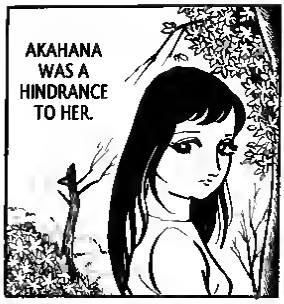
WHERE DID THIS COME FROM?

IS IT THAT YOU DON'T TRUST ME?

SFX: ON!
あっ
DON'T BE FRIGHTENED.

AFTER SAYING THAT, THE GIRL DISAPPEARED BEFORE YAMAMOTO'S EYES.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M ASKING YOU.
DON'T GET THE WRONG IMPRESSION, IT WAS AKAHANA'S IDEA.
I WANT TO KNOW WHETHER OR NOT YOU LOVE ME.
SHE HADN'T APPEARED AGAIN FOR A LONG TIME, SOMETHING THAT CONSTANTLY DISTRESSED YAMAMOTO. ONE DAY HE AND AKAHANA WENT OUT AMONG THE FESTIVAL.
SPRING ARRIVED AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD WAS DECKED OUT IN FESTIVITIES TO CELEBRATE THE CHANGE OF SEASON.


IT WAS A CALM, SUNNY DAY, AND THE PLACE WAS JAM-PACKED. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CROWD THERE WAS A LONE WOMAN STANDING STILL WITH A SORROWFUL EXPRESSION. HOWEVER, NOBODY SEEMED TO NOTICE HER PRESENCE. WHEN YAMAMOTO REALIZED IT WAS HER, A FLOOD OF SWEET MEMORIES CAME SUDDENLY TO HIS MIND
HEY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
IT'S HER.
IT'S BEEN SO LONG! LET'S GO TO SOME QUIET SPOT TO TALK.


AKAHANA WAS A HINDRANCE TO HER.

THE PHANTOM? DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT FALLING IN WITH HER AGAIN!

AFTER A MOMENT'S HESITATION...

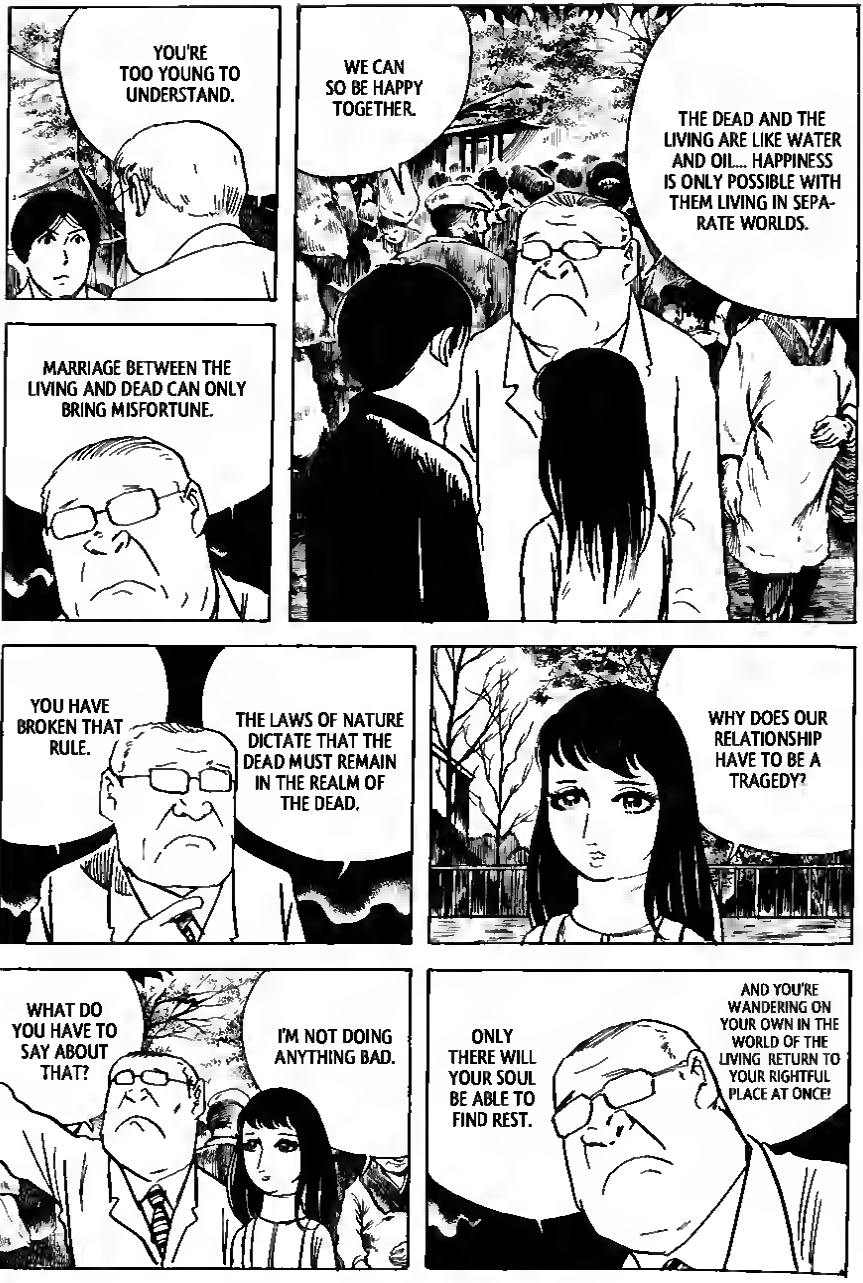
AKAHANA BEGAN TO RISE THROUGH THE AIR.
OH!

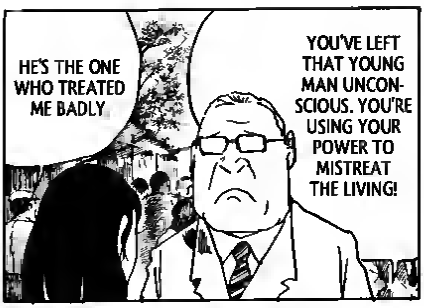
HUP!
...SHE LIFTED HER HAND RESOLUTELY AND POINTED TOWARD THE SKY.

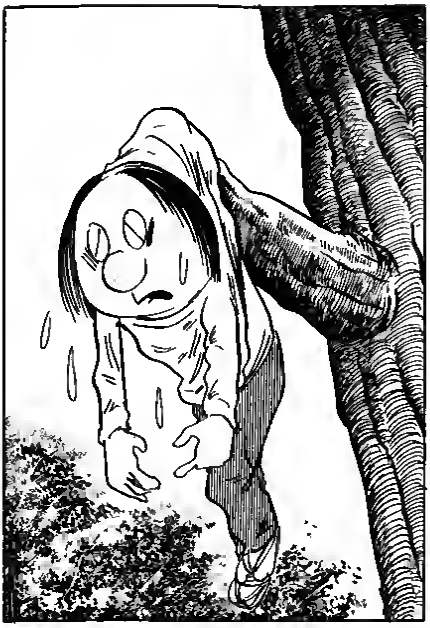
?

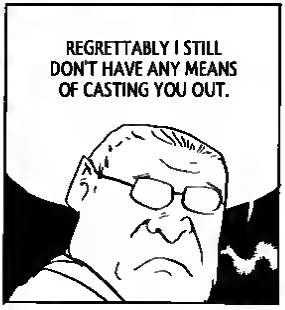
WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
THIS WAY HE WON'T BOTHER US FOR QUITE A WHILE.
I DON'T BELONG TO THIS WORLD AND THAT'S WHY NOBODY CAN SEE ME... EXCEPT YOU, YAMAMOTO. YOU'RE THE ONLY PERSON WHO NOTICES ME.

IT WAS TRUE. YOU'RE NOT A NORMAL WOMAN.
THEN...
I'M SO HAPPY TO HAVE MET YOU... PLEASE, FREE ME FROM MY SOLITUDE.
WHATEVER. I DON'T INTEND TO BREAK UP WITH YOU.
I DON'T UNDER-STAND IT EITHER.
WHAT I DON'T GET IS WHY I'M THE ONLY ONE ABLE TO SEE YOU.
HOLD ON. YOU TWO SHOULDN'T SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN. I SAY THIS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD.

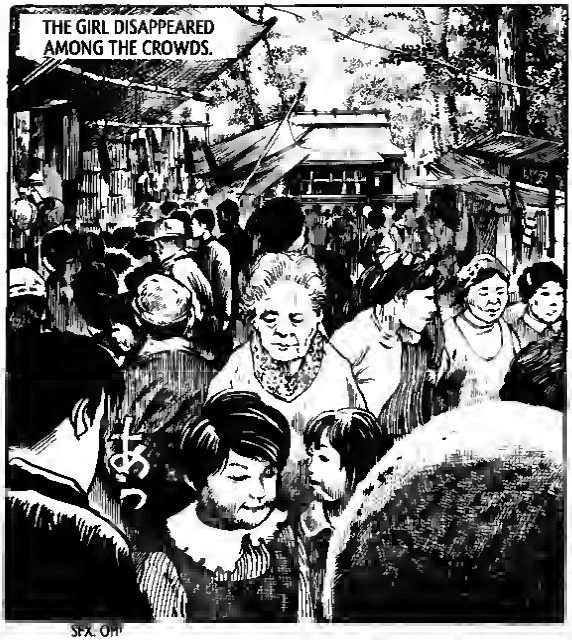

YOU'RE TOO YOUNG TO UNDERSTAND.
WE CAN SO BE HAPPY TOGETHER.
THE DEAD AND THE LIVING ARE LIKE WATER AND OIL... HAPPINESS IS ONLY POSSIBLE WITH THEM LIVING IN SEPARATE WORLDS.
MARRIAGE BETWEEN THE LIVING AND DEAD CAN ONLY BRING MISFORTUNE.
YOU HAVE BROKEN THAT RULE.
THE LAWS OF NATURE DICTATE THAT THE DEAD MUST REMAIN IN THE REALM OF THE DEAD.
WHY DOES OUR RELATIONSHIP HAVE TO BE A TRAGEDY?
WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THAT?
I'M NOT DOING ANYTHING BAD.
ONLY THERE WILL YOUR SOUL BE ABLE TO FIND REST.
AND YOU'RE WANDERING ON YOUR OWN IN THE WORLD OF THE LIVING. RETURN TO YOUR RIGHTFUL PLACE AT ONCE!





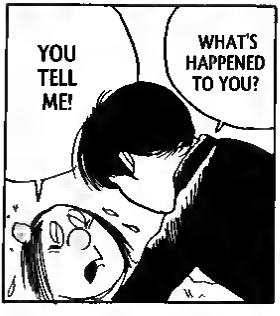


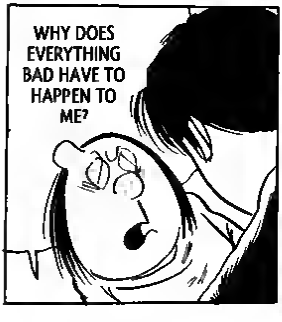
SFX. HO HO HO HO

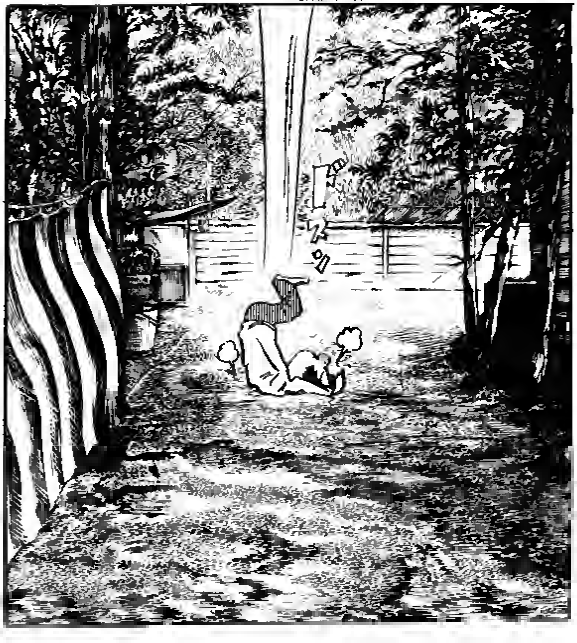

THE GIRL DISAPPEARED AMONG THE CROWDS.
SFX. OH!

OF COURSE NOT.
DON'T YOU HATE ME AFTER WHAT YOU'VE SEEN?

SEE YOU SOON.
PEOPLE COULD SUSPECT SOMETHING.
SFX. WHOP


YOU TELL ME!
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOU?


WHY DOES EVERYTHING BAD HAVE TO HAPPEN TO ME?



A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER...
藤倉婦生装店
金花堂

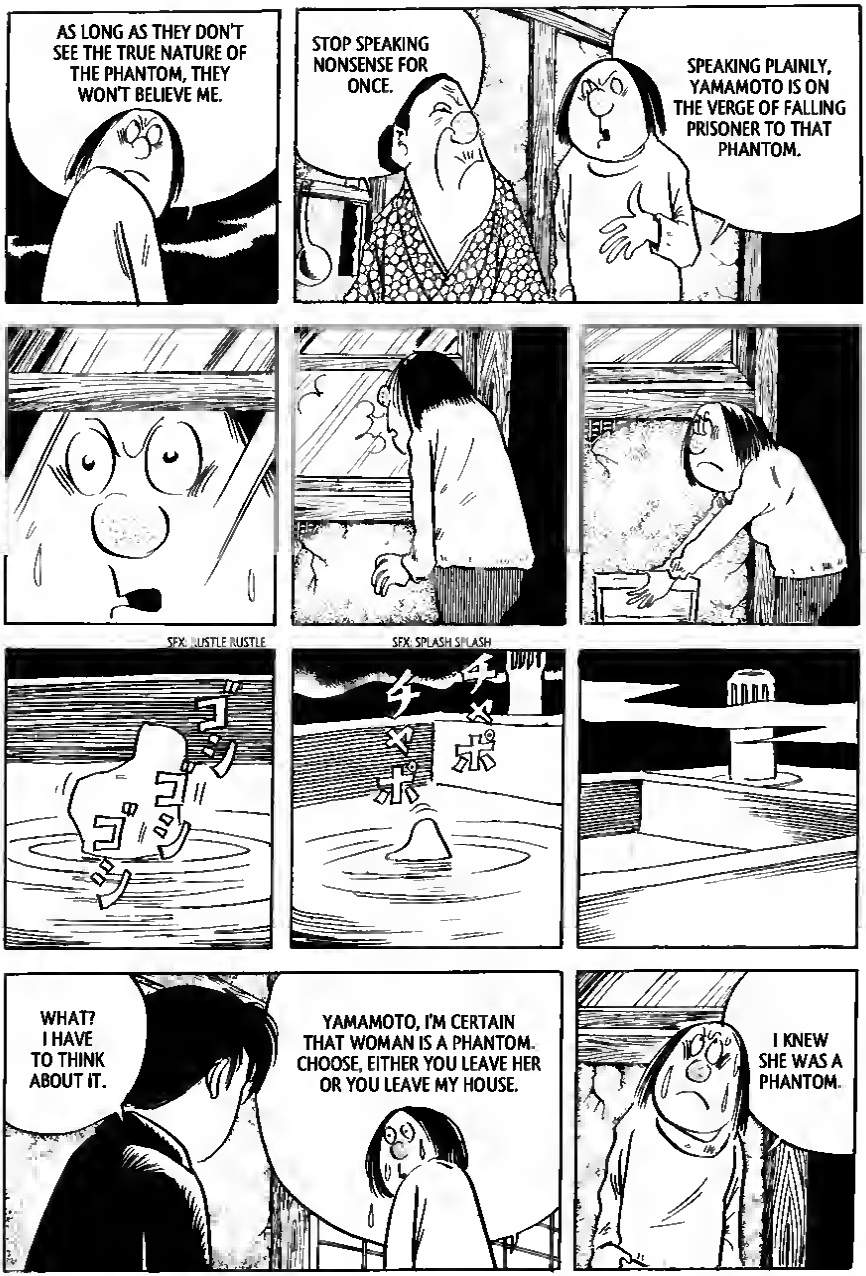
SHE NO LONGER NEEDED TO HIDE HER IDENTITY AND HER EXPRESSION WAS VERY HAPPY.

SHE DROPPED BY AKAHANA'S HOUSE AGAIN.

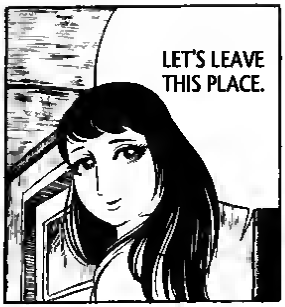
WHY ARE YOU TAKING THE TROUBLE OF BRINGING GIFTS?
HELLO, DEAR!

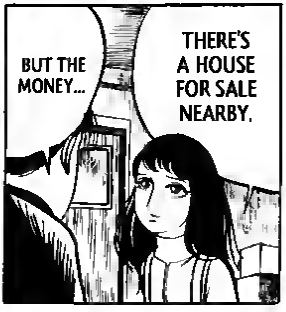
SFX. MMMM..
OH, EXCUSE ME. THIS SHOULDN'T BE HERE.
もじもじ
OH, A KIMONO! BUT DON'T STAY THERE, COME IN.
SFX. ZAP
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, MOM?! AND WHAT WILL I TELL THE PROFESSOR NOW?
SFX. CRASH
ガラガラガシャ
THIS BELONGS TO MY FAILURE OF A SON
SFX. WHAP
ピシャッ
MISS, MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME.
YOU BE QUIET! GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM
COME UP TO MY ROOM.
YAMAMOTO! YOU'VE GOT A VISITOR!
AH, YOU WANT TO SEE YAMAMOTO, RIGHT?

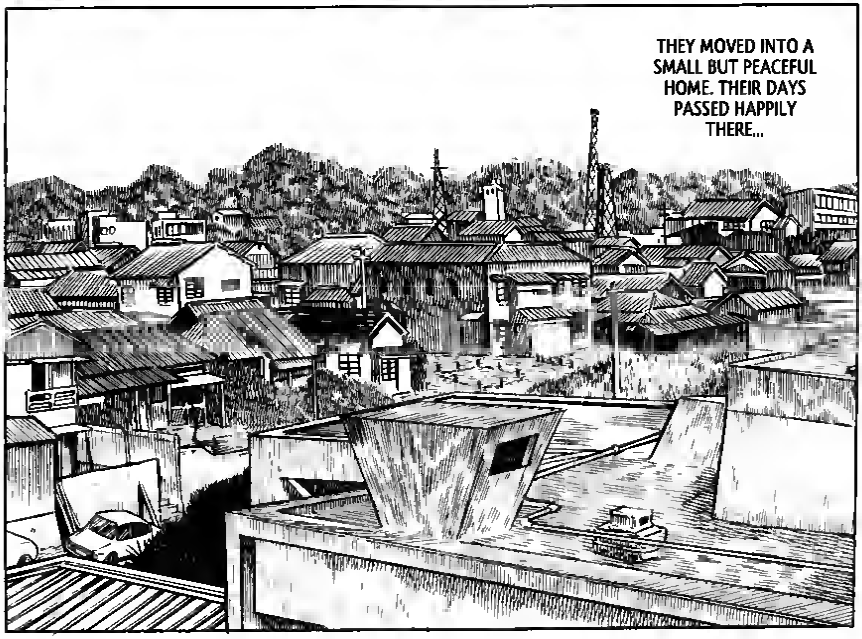
I HAVEN'T HAD ONE FOR SO LONG...
YES, PLEASE, I INSIST.
A BATH?
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A BATH FIRST? IT'LL PUT YOU AT EASE.
I'LL WAIT FOR YOU UPSTAIRS
ALRIGHT.
WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THAT THING LIVES. ARE YOU GOING TO LET IT USE THE BATH?
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
MOM.
YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND.
YOU STILL BELIEVE THOSE OLD MYTHS?
IF IT GETS A WHIM TO BITE YOU IN THE BATH, IT WON'T BE MY FAULT.


AS LONG AS THEY DON'T SEE THE TRUE NATURE OF THE PHANTOM, THEY WON'T BELIEVE ME.
STOP SPEAKING NONSENSE FOR ONCE.
SPEAKING PLAINLY, YAMAMOTO IS ON THE VERGE OF FALLING PRISONER TO THAT PHANTOM.
SFX: RUSTLE RUSTLE
SFX: SPLASH SPLASH
WHAT? I HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT.
YAMAMOTO, I'M CERTAIN THAT WOMAN IS A PHANTOM. CHOOSE, EITHER YOU LEAVE HER OR YOU LEAVE MY HOUSE.
I KNEW SHE WAS A PHANTOM.

WE DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THAT.

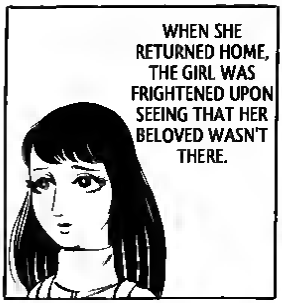

LET'S LEAVE THIS PLACE.


BUT THE MONEY...
THERE'S A HOUSE FOR SALE NEARBY.


THEY MOVED INTO A SMALL BUT PEACEFUL HOME. THEIR DAYS PASSED HAPPILY THERE...

I FINALLY FOUND YOU.
HOWEVER, THAT HAPPINESS WASN'T GOING TO LAST LONG.
PROFESSOR TSUBAKI!
WE'VE MADE A DEVICE THAT INTERCEPTS SPECTRAL VIBRATIONS. WE'RE GOING TO FREE YOU WITH THIS.
WE DID IT.
LOOK AT THIS.
SPARE YOURSELF ANY EXPLANATIONS. SHE'S NOT HOME NOW, RIGHT?
DON'T BE STUPID.
WAIT A MINUTE, PLEASE.
WHEN I SHINE THIS MACHINE'S RAY OF LIGHT UPON YOU, YOU'LL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO SEE ONE ANOTHER EVER AGAIN.
...

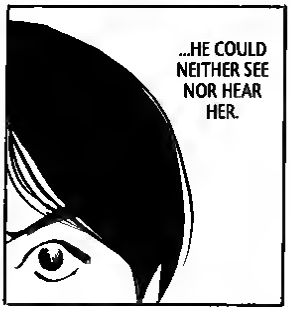
SFX FLASH
OH!
WE HAVE TO DO IT BEFORE SHE RETURNS.
YOU'RE SAFE NOW. QUICKLY, I'LL SHELTER YOU IN MY HOUSE.
I CAN'T ABANDON HER LIKE THAT. WAIT FOR A BIT.
WELL I CAN'T RISK HER FINDING ME HERE. I'M LEAVING.


WHEN SHE RETURNED HOME, THE GIRL WAS FRIGHTENED UPON SEEING THAT HER BELOVED WASN'T THERE.

DARLING?

YAMAMOTO WAS SITTING IN THE DINING ROOM BUT...

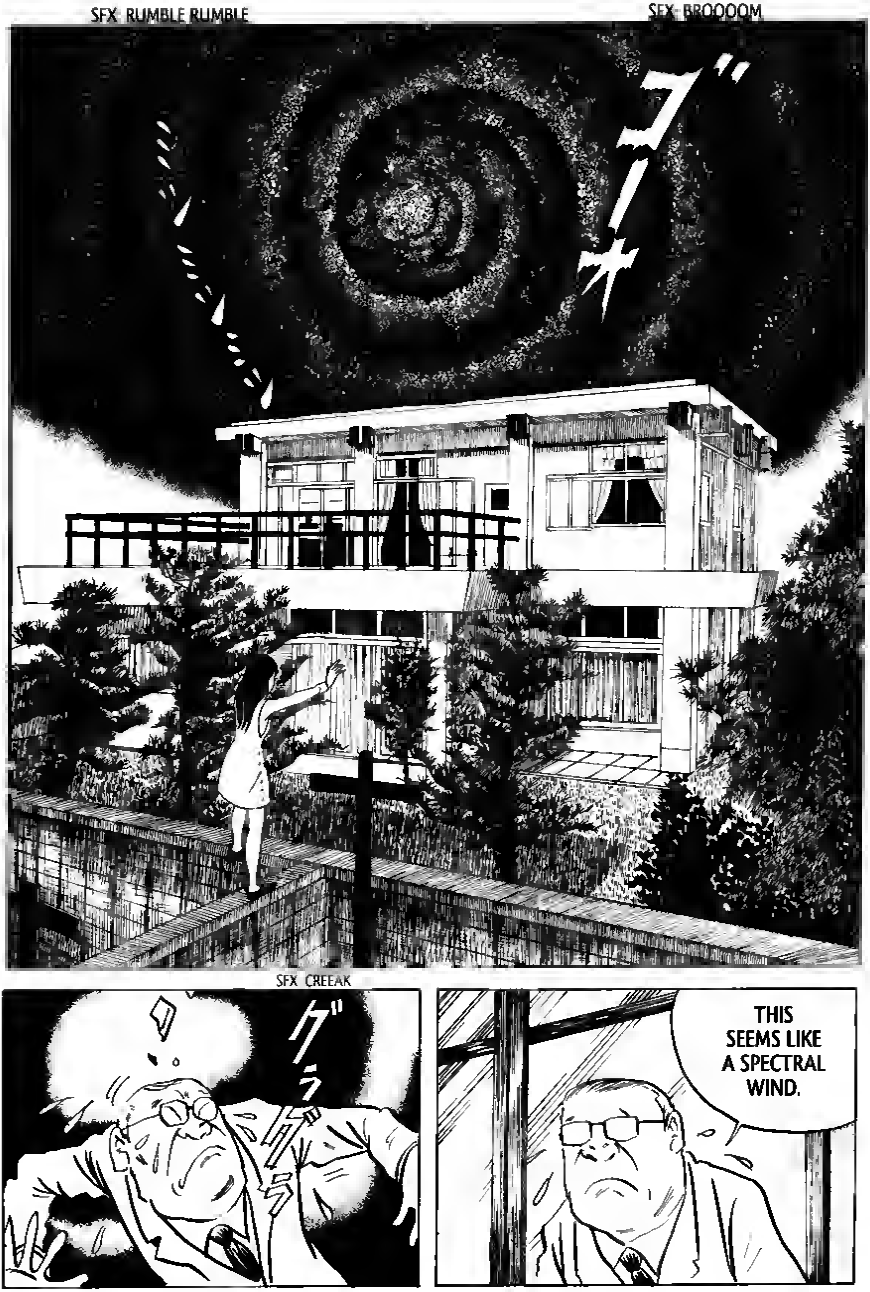
HER VOICE ECHOED SADLY IN THE ROOM, WITHOUT ANYONE WHO COULD LISTEN TO HER.
YAMAMOTO!

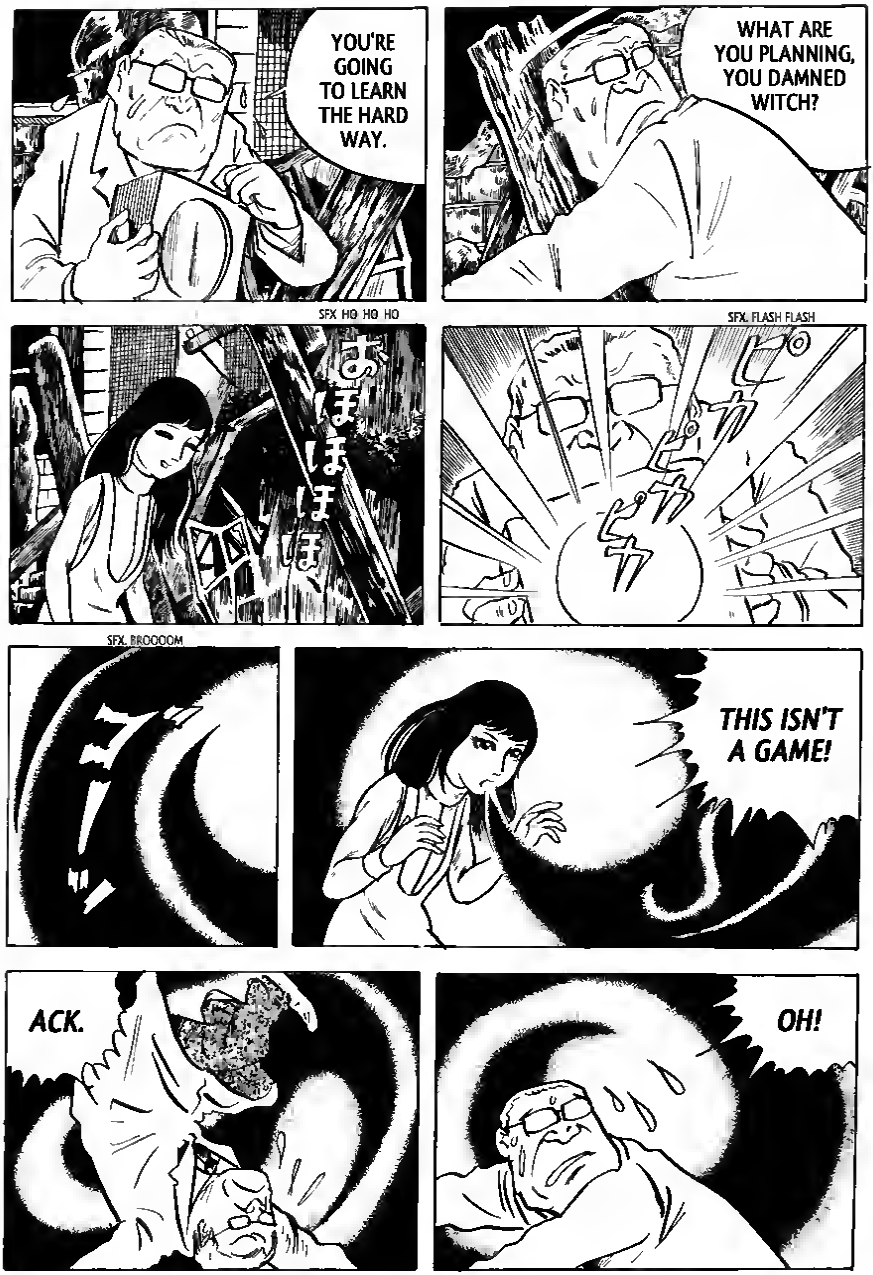

...HE COULD NEITHER SEE NOR HEAR HER.

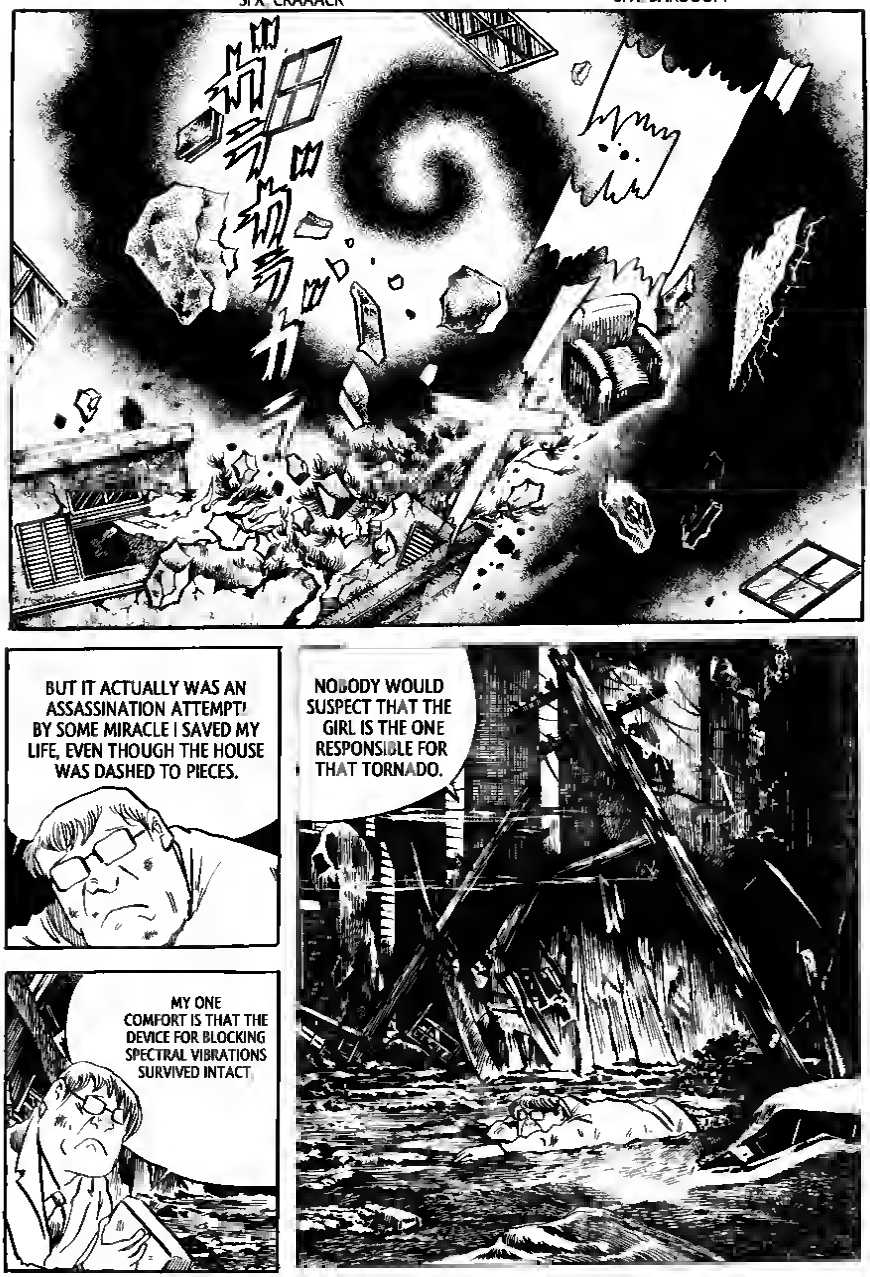
DESPITE BEING NEXT TO ONE ANOTHER, THEY WERE UNABLE TO SENSE THE OTHER'S PRESENCE.

I'M CERTAIN IT'S THE WORK OF THAT TSUBAKI.
THEIR EYES AND EARS WERE BLOCKED.
HOWEVER MUCH SHE SHOUTED, IT WAS ALL USELESS. DOCTOR TSUBAKI HAD IRREVERSIBLY DISTORTED THE SPECTRAL VIBRATIONS THAT KEPT THE YOUNG COUPLE CONNECTED.
IT HAD TO BE YAMAMOTO WALKING... BUT SHE COULDN'T SENSE HIM, AND NEITHER COULD HE SENSE HER.
THEN SHE FOCUSED ON THE FLOOR, AND SHE REALIZED THAT THE TATAMI MAT WOULD SINK IN SLIGHTLY AT TIMES.
PROFESSOR! NOW YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN JUST WHAT I'M ABLE TO DO WITH MY POWERS!
AND SHE WENT TO THE SCIENTIST'S RESIDENCE.

SHE CRIED OUT A SOUND SIMILAR TO THE NOISE OF WIND, AND AT THE SAME TIME A TERRIFYING GALE WAS FORMING AROUND THE BUILDING.
SFX: BROOOOM


SFX: RUMBLE RUMBLE
SFX: BROOOOM
ゴ〜オ
SFX: CREEAK
ケ〜ラ
THIS SEEMS LIKE A SPECTRAL WIND.


YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN THE HARD WAY.
WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING, YOU DAMNED WITCH?
SFX HO HO HO
SFX. FLASH FLASH
SFX. BROOOOM
THIS ISN'T A GAME!
ACK.
OH!


SFX: CRAAACK
SFX: BAROOOM
BUT IT ACTUALLY WAS AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT! BY SOME MIRACLE I SAVED MY LIFE, EVEN THOUGH THE HOUSE WAS DASHED TO PIECES.
MY ONE COMFORT IS THAT THE DEVICE FOR BLOCKING SPECTRAL VIBRATIONS SURVIVED INTACT.
NOBODY WOULD SUSPECT THAT THE GIRL IS THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT TORNADO.

SFX: WAAAH!
あーっ
SFX: HO, HO, HO
YOU LOOK LIKE A CAGED BEAR. HOW RIDICULOUS!
おほほほ
SFX: KERWHUMP
ばたん
SFX: UGH
おお
SFX: ZOOM
トー
SFX: HO, HO, HO HO
おほほほほ
YOU'VE TRANSFORMED INTO A GIANT!
SFX: UGH/OW, OUCH
うううう
いてててて
NO, HONEY. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO BECAME TINY.

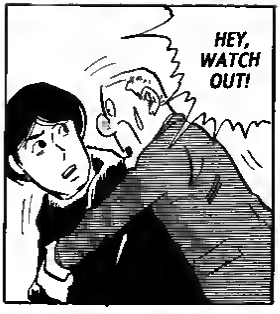
SFX. BLAH BLAH BLAH
PRAYING WON'T DO ANYTHING FOR YOU NOW.
SFX. TAP TAP
SFX. MMMPH
I'LL DISCARD YOU ON THE ROAD. LET'S SEE WHETHER YOU DIE CRUSHED BY A BIKE OR EATEN BY A RAT.
HEE, HEE, HEE. WHAT A CUTE LITTLE MEATBALL.
SFX. MMMPH
THEN, ANSWER ME.
OH, YEAH?
SFX. FWAP
HELP ME! I'LL DO WHATEVER YOU TELL ME!
SFX. FWIP

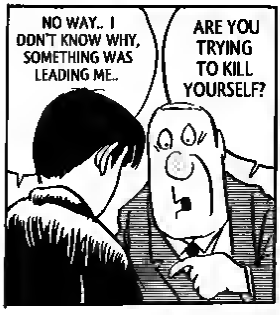
SO, THE LIGHT IN REVERSE...
SHINING MY MACHINE IN REVERSE WILL SUFFICE.
OF COURSE.
CAN YOU MAKE IT SO I SEE MY BOY-FRIEND AGAIN?
SFX: FWIP
WAH!
ポン
THEN I DON'T NEED YOU ANY LONGER.
YES, YES!
IS THIS THE DEVICE?
SFX: PLOP
コロコロコロ
SFX: WAAAH!
うわ!

SFX: FLASH FLASH
WHEN SHE RETURNED TO THEIR HOME, SHE BEGAN TO AIM THE RAY OF LIGHT, IN REVERSE, IN EVERY DIRECTION.
MY LOVE!
THE PROFESSOR TOYED WITH ME!
HE STILL HAS A BARRIER TO SENSING ME.
I CAN SEE YOU, BUT YOU CAN'T SEE ME... AND YOU CAN'T HEAR ME EITHER, RIGHT?

AFTER PONDERING THE MATTER, SHE CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE ONLY SOLUTION WAS TO TURN YAMAMOTO INTO A SPIRIT... THAT IS, HE HAD TO DIE. HOWEVER, THE GIRL COULDN'T CONVEY THE IDEA TO HIM. IT HAD TO BE SHE HERSELF WHO KILLED HIM. WITH TEARY EYES, SHE MADE A FIRM DECISION TO CARRY OUT THE PLAN. FROM THEN ON SHE DIDN'T PART FROM HIM, IN ORDER TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY OCCASION THAT PRESENTED ITSELF... ALL FOR THE GOOD OF THEIR FUTURE HAPPINESS.

SFX ZIG ZAG





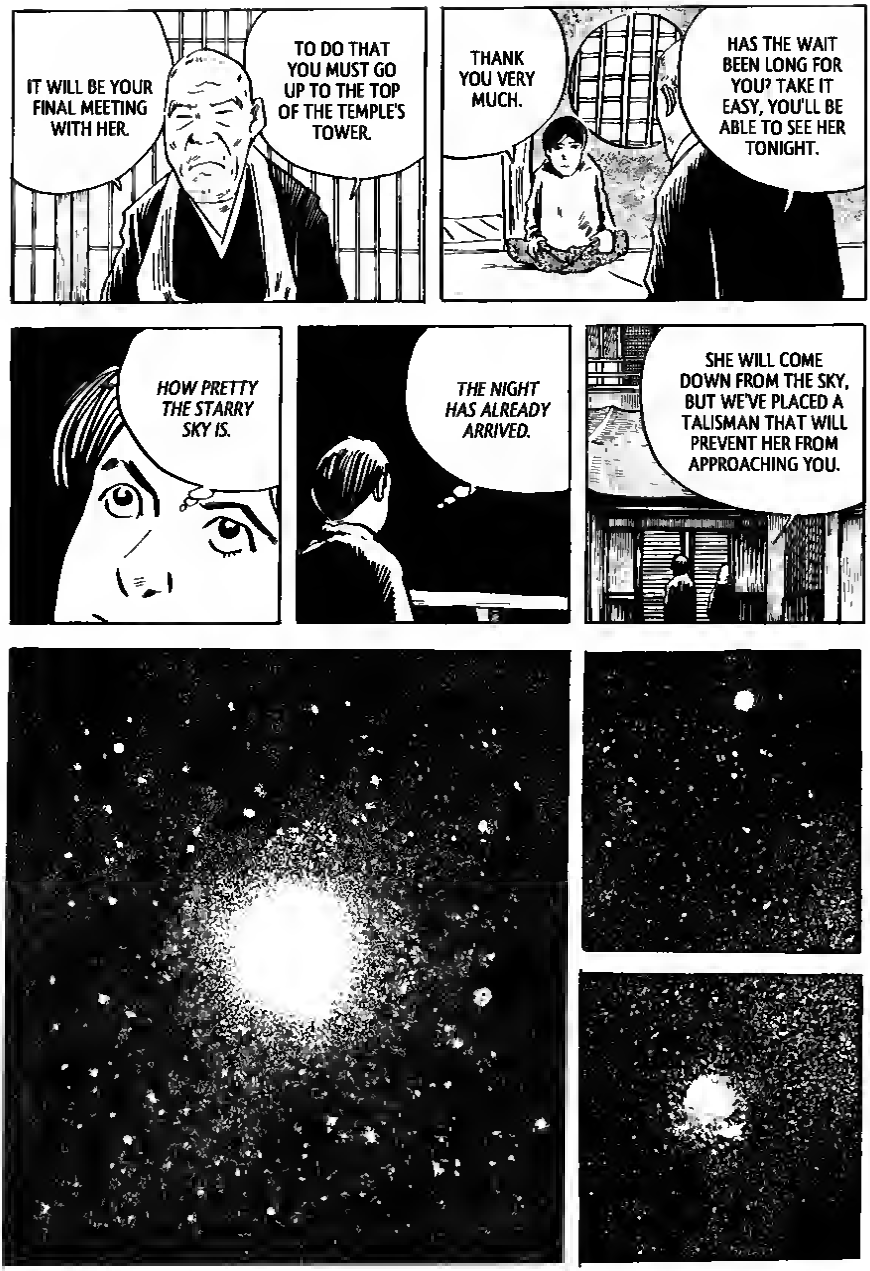
SFX ZIG ZAG
HUH?
LOOK OUT!
ANOTHER DAY...
北海道拓殖銀行
I WONDER WHY EXACTLY I SOMETIMES TRY TO TAKE MY LIFE?
I FEEL LIKE THROWING MYSELF FROM A CLIFF...
DARLING, DON'T YOU WANT TO LIVE WITH ME FOR ALL ETERNITY? SUMMON YOUR COURAGE AND THROW YOURSELF OFF A CLIFF. LOOK, THE TRAIN'S ARRIVING

WAIT A MINUTE!
THE TRAIN TOOK HIM TO A REMOTE CORNER OF THE MOUNTAIN. WHEN HE WENT WALKING FOR A SPELL...
WHO ARE YOU?
I'M SURE THE SCIENTIST HAS SENT YOU
I DON'T NEED LECTURES.
...AND, TO TOP IT OFF, YOU'RE TRYING TO KILL HIM.
IT SEEMS YOU DON'T WANT TO SETTLE DOWN. YOU'VE VIOLATED THE ORDER OF THE SPIRIT WORLD, YOU'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH A LIVING PERSON...
I SEE THAT YOU'RE GETTING SERIOUS
I'M HERE TO TAKE YOU TO THE PLACE YOU CAME FROM.

SFX. OOOMPH/MMMM
うむっ
とーっ
SFX. FWISH
ういー
SFX. AAARGH
カ〜ッ
THE MONK'S SUPERIORITY WAS OBVIOUS. THE GIRL PRETENDED THAT SHE'D BEEN WIPED OUT AND TOOK THE CHANCE TO FLEE.
YOU MEAN ME?
WHAT?
HEY, YOUNG MAN!
HRM, SHE'S ESCAPED ME.

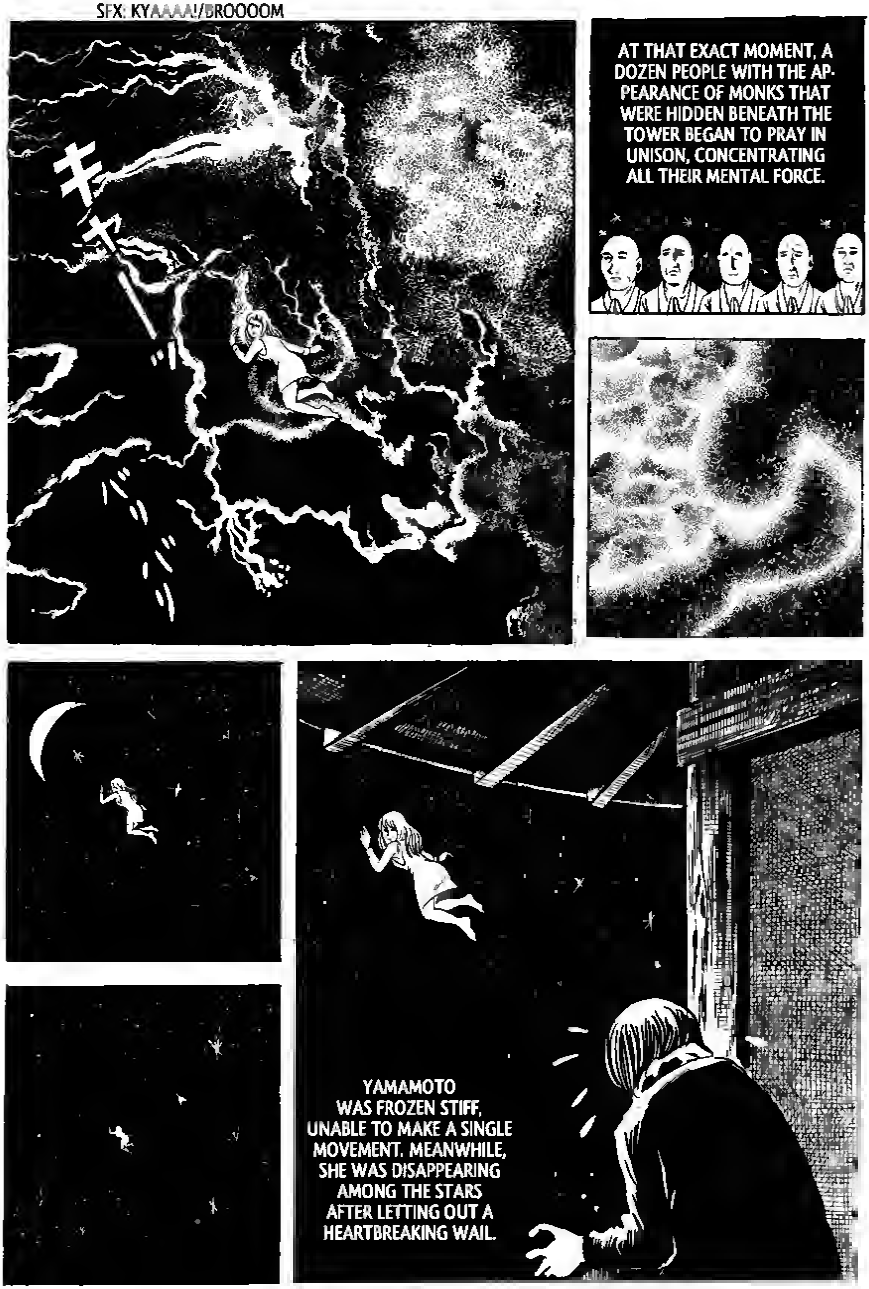
A SPIRIT?
YOU'RE POSSESSED BY A SPIRIT. IF YOU CONTINUE LIKE THIS, YOU'LL END UP LOSING YOUR LIFE.
YOU CAN'T SEE HER ANY LONGER, BUT I CAN. SHE'S STALKING YOU.
ARE YOU REFERRING TO THAT GIRL?
SURELY SHE BUILT UP HER HOPES OF HAVING A ROMANCE BEFORE SHE DIED AND CAN'T ACCEPT HER OWN DEATH.
IT'S THE SOUL OF AN 18-YEAR-OLD GIRL.
COME, I'LL PUT YOU UP IN MY TEMPLE FOR A FEW DAYS.
ADMITTED IN THE HOSPITAL WITH FRACTURES ALL OVER HIS BODY.
WHERE IS THE DOCTOR?
YOU'VE MANAGED TO SURVIVE FOR NOW THANKS TO DOCTOR TSUBAKI.

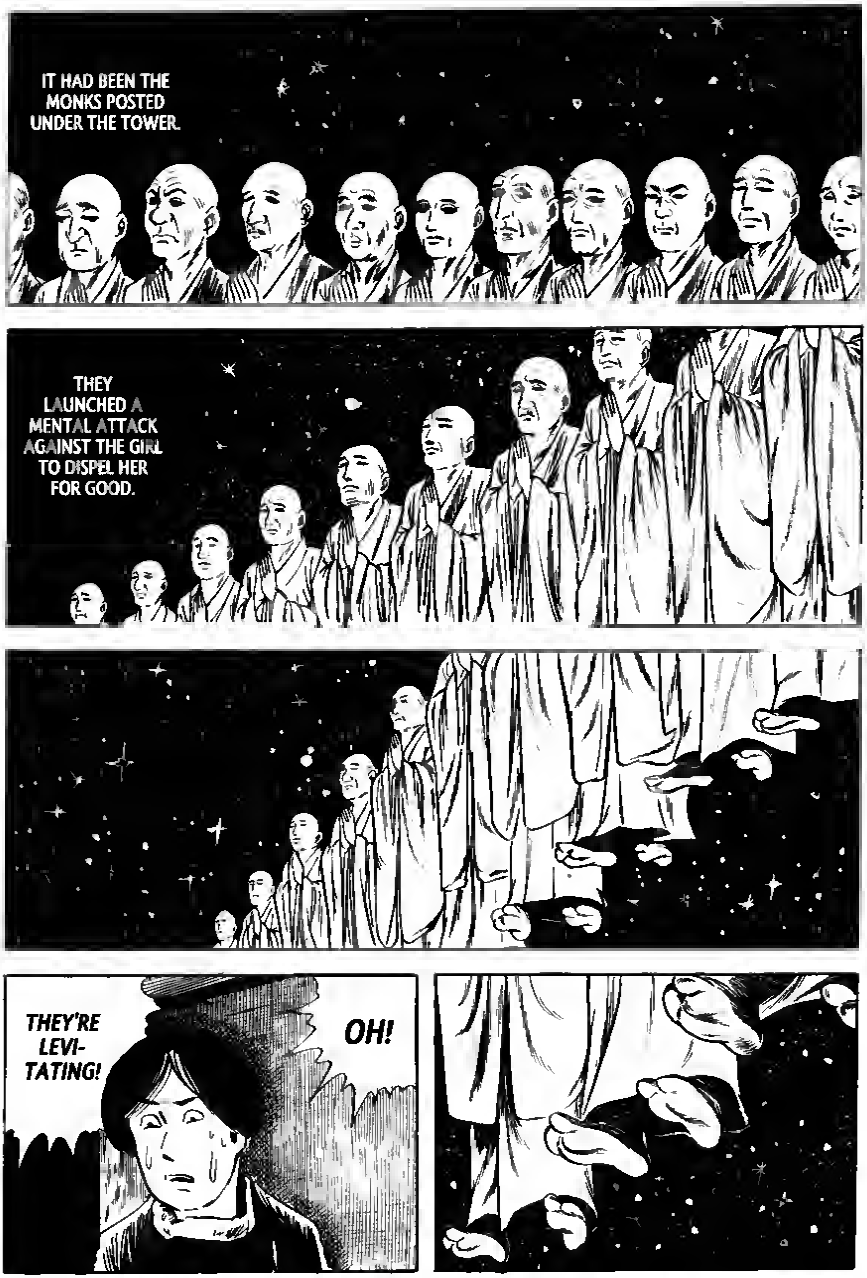
EVERYBODY WANTS TO LIVE FOREVER, BUT DEATH STANDS IN OUR WAY.
THAT GIRL ISN'T DOING ANYTHING WRONG.
DOCTOR TSUBAKI REQUESTED IT OF ME.
I'D ONLY LIKE TO MAKE A SINGLE REQUEST..
I UNDER-STAND.
THERE'S NO SENSE IN YOU GIVING THAT IDEA ANY THOUGHT. THE LAWS OF NATURE CLEARLY DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH. THAT IS THE ORDER OF THINGS.
AND TWO OR THREE DAYS PASSED...
I ALREADY KNOW, MY BOY. YOU WANT TO SEE THE GIRL ONE MORE TIME, RIGHT? YOU'LL GET THE OPPORTUNITY LATER. UNTIL THEN, WAIT IN THE TEMPLE. SHE WON'T BE ABLE TO RESIST IT AND SHE'LL DROP IN VERY SOON.

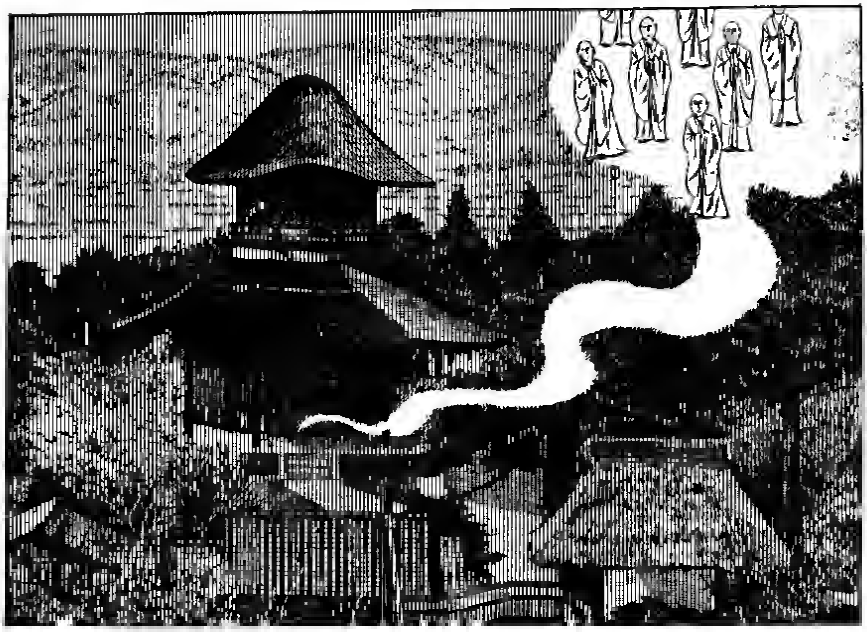

IT WILL BE YOUR FINAL MEETING WITH HER.
TO DO THAT YOU MUST GO UP TO THE TOP OF THE TEMPLE'S TOWER.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
HAS THE WAIT BEEN LONG FOR YOU? TAKE IT EASY, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE HER TONIGHT.
HOW PRETTY THE STARRY SKY IS.
THE NIGHT HAS ALREADY ARRIVED.
SHE WILL COME DOWN FROM THE SKY, BUT WE'VE PLACED A TALISMAN THAT WILL PREVENT HER FROM APPROACHING YOU.

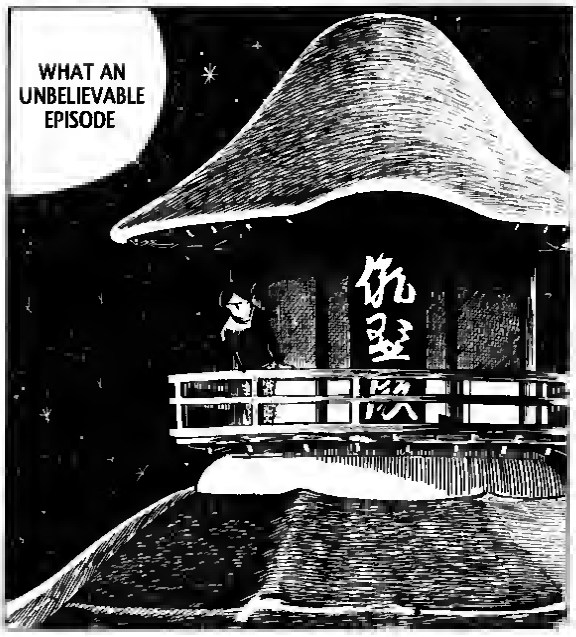
SFX: DARLIING!
OKAY!
JOIN ME IN THE SPIRIT WORLD. QUICKLY, JUMP FROM THAT TOWER AND WE CAN BE TOGETHER FOREVER.
THIS IS THE END. EVEN KNOWING THAT THE MONK'S SET A TRAP FOR ME, I'VE COME HERE TO ASK YOU FOR ONE FINAL FAVOR.
TELL ME, I'LL LISTEN TO YOU.
YOU HAVE TO DO WHAT I SAY.

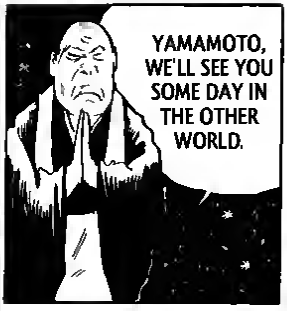
I'LL DO IT.
PLEASE, DARLING. IT'S THE LAST THING I ASK OF YOU


SFX: KYAAAA!/DROOOOM
AT THAT EXACT MOMENT, A DOZEN PEOPLE WITH THE APPEARANCE OF MONKS THAT WERE HIDDEN BENEATH THE TOWER BEGAN TO PRAY IN UNISON, CONCENTRATING ALL THEIR MENTAL FORCE.
YAMAMOTO WAS FROZEN STIFF, UNABLE TO MAKE A SINGLE MOVEMENT. MEANWHILE, SHE WAS DISAPPEARING AMONG THE STARS AFTER LETTING OUT A HEARTBREAKING WAIL.

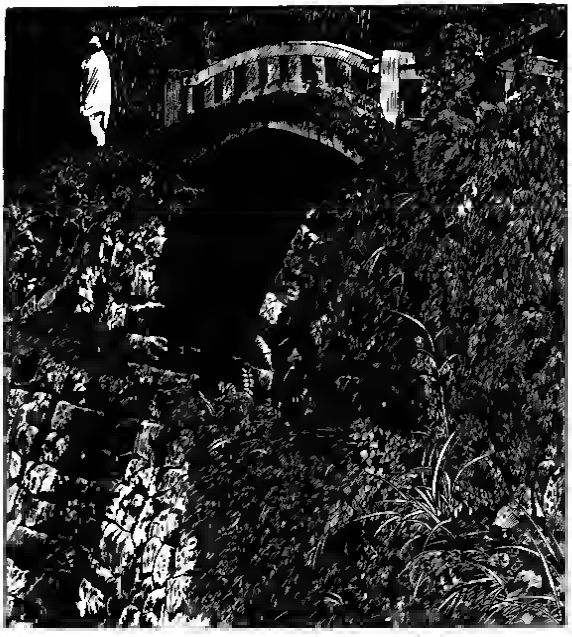

IT HAD BEEN THE MONKS POSTED UNDER THE TOWER.
THEY LAUNCHED A MENTAL ATTACK AGAINST THE GIRL TO DISPEL HER FOR GOOD.
THEY'RE LEVI-TATING!
OH!



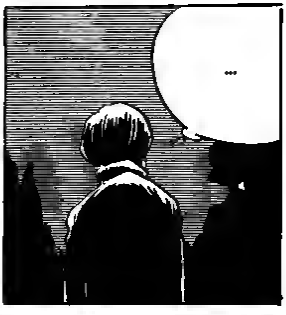




THE MONKS WERE VANISHING INTO THE NIGHT SKY, UNTIL YAMAMOTO WAS LEFT COMPLETELY ALONE IN THE DECREPIT OLD TEMPLE.



SO THOSE MONKS WERE SPIRITS.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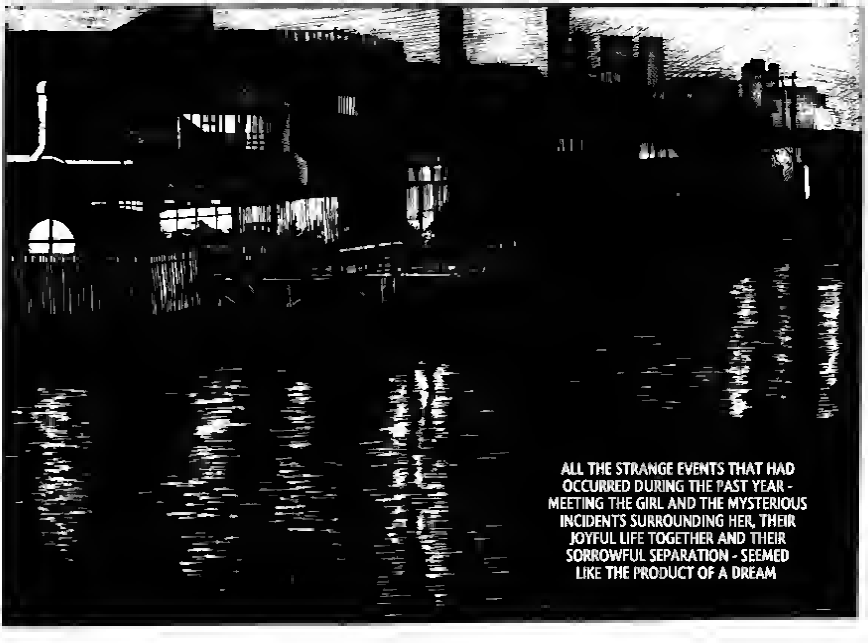
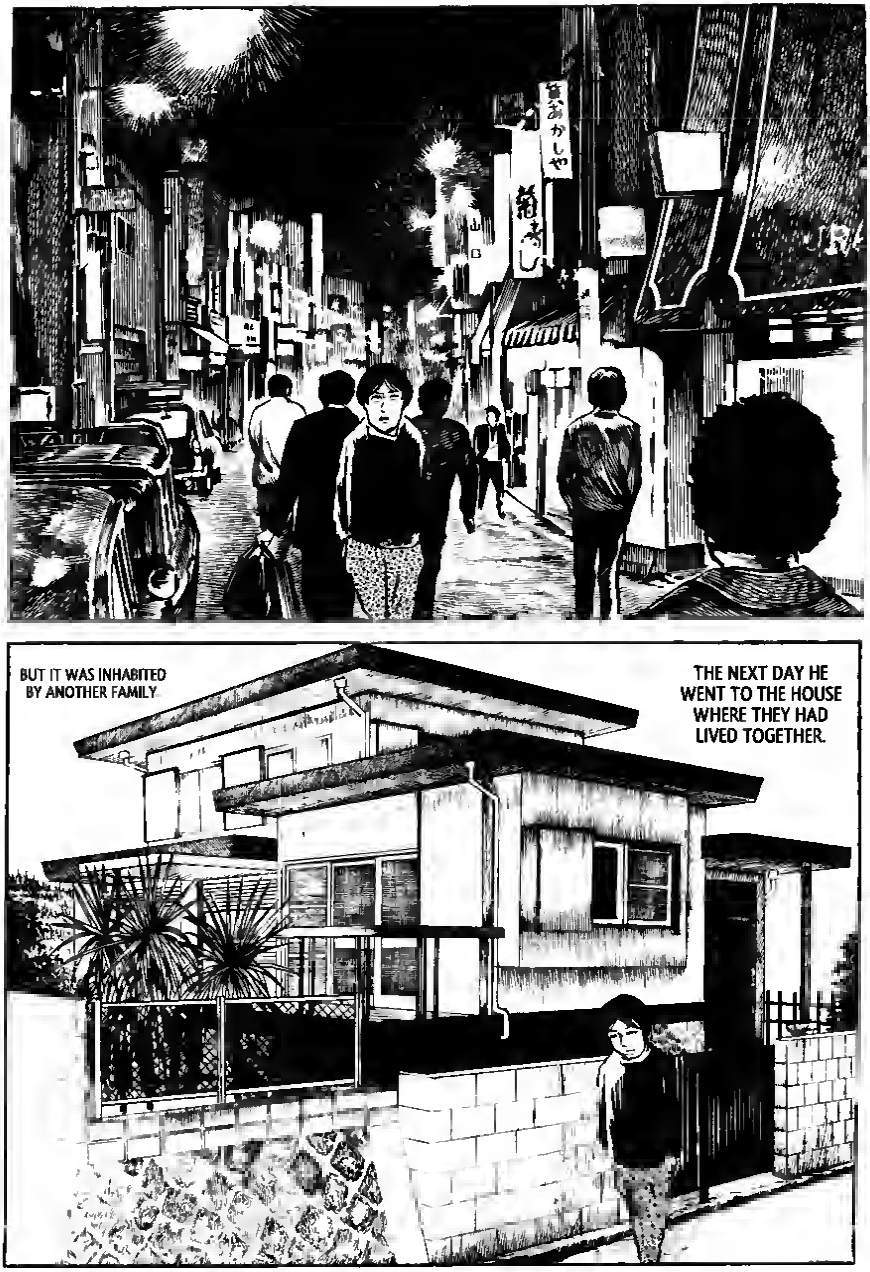
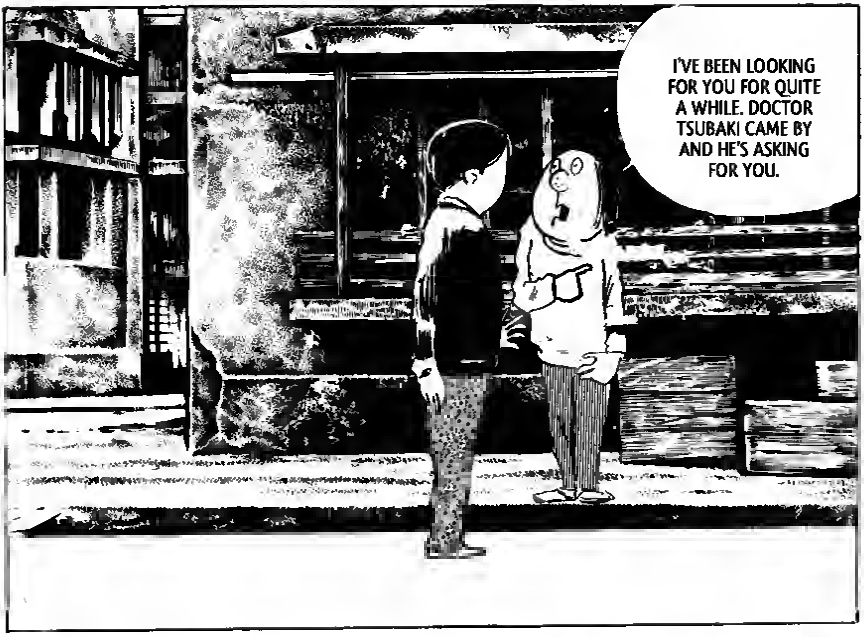

ALL THE STRANGE EVENTS THAT HAD OCCURRED DURING THE PAST YEAR - MEETING THE GIRL AND THE MYSTERIOUS INCIDENTS SURROUNDING HER, THEIR JOYFUL LIFE TOGETHER AND THEIR SORROWFUL SEPARATION - SEEMED LIKE THE PRODUCT OF A DREAM

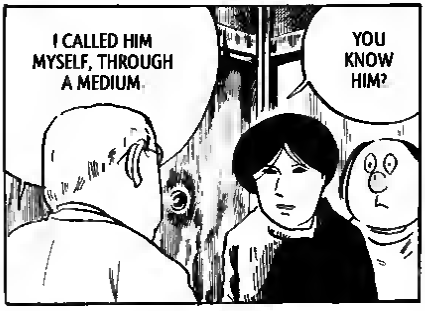

BUT IT WAS INHABITED BY ANOTHER FAMILY.
THE NEXT DAY HE WENT TO THE HOUSE WHERE THEY HAD LIVED TOGETHER.

JUST SOMETHING I DREAMED UP?
I'LL GO LOOKING FOR AKAHANA.
I WONDER IF ALL THAT IS...
HEY! WHERE'D YOU HOLE YOURSELF UP?
AH.


I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU FOR QUITE A WHILE. DOCTOR TSUBAKI CAME BY AND HE'S ASKING FOR YOU.

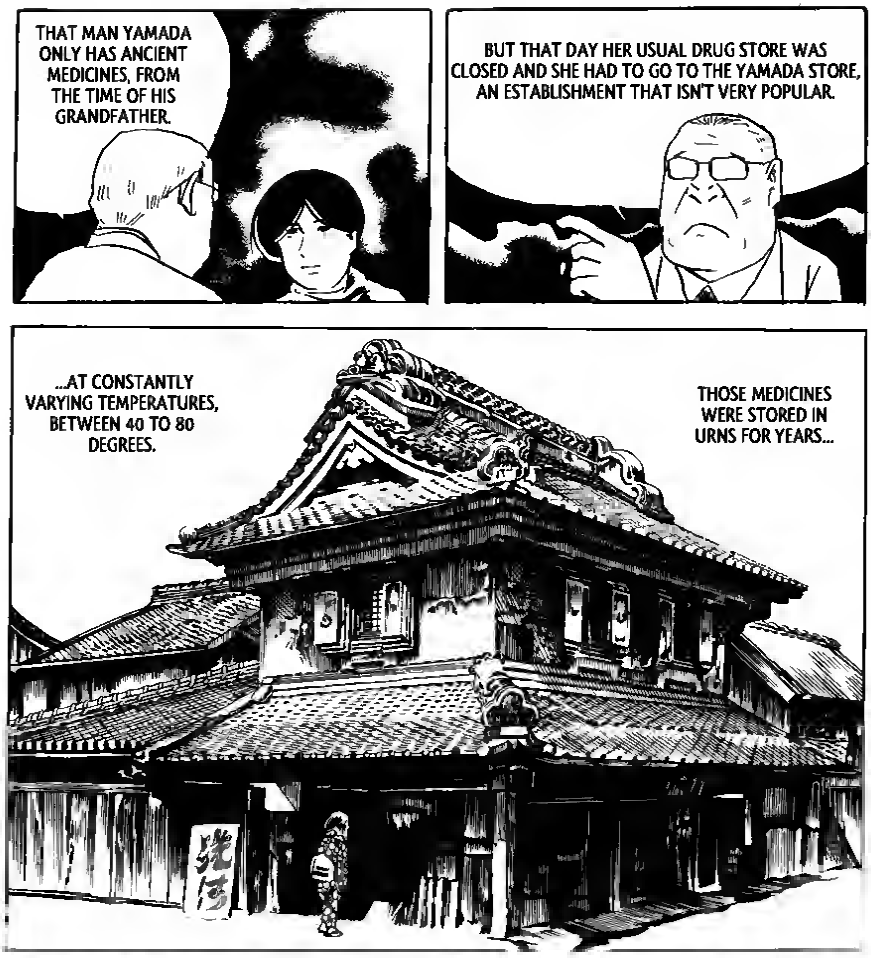
WELL THERE, YAMAMOTO. I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE DOING WELL.

OH, REALLY?


I CALLED HIM MYSELF, THROUGH A MEDIUM.
YOU KNOW HIM?

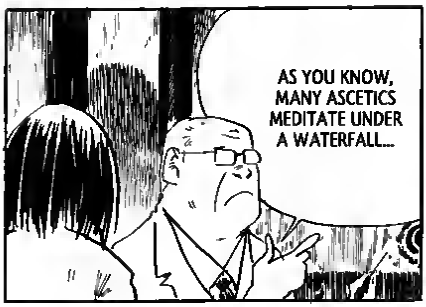
ARE YOU REFERRING TO THE MONK, SOJO TENKAI?
I'VE HAD AN INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCE.

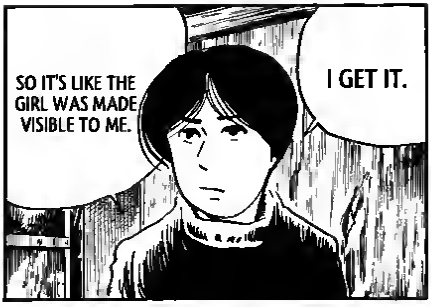
AS I WAS HOSPITALIZED WITH ALL THE BONES IN MY BODY BROKEN, I ASKED HIM TO HEAL ME IN PASSING
IN FACT, HE'S A MAN FROM THE PAST.
AHA. I HAD A HUNCH HE CAME FROM THE GREAT BEYOND.
PROFES-SOR.
MOM! GIVE US A MINUTE, CAN'T YOU SEE WE'RE TALKING...
SHOULDN'T YOU BE OUT SELLING MANGA?
WHY WAS I ABLE TO SEE THAT WOMAN?
...SHE WAS TAKING PILLS FROM TRADITIONAL MEDICINE
AS YOU KNOW, SHE SUFFERS FROM EPILEPSY. TO PREVENT ITS ATTACKS...
ACCORDING TO MY RESEARCH, THE CAUSE IS IN THE MEDICINE OF AKAHANA'S MOTHER.

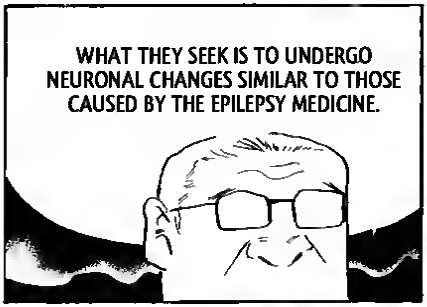

THAT MAN YAMADA ONLY HAS ANCIENT MEDICINES, FROM THE TIME OF HIS GRANDFATHER.
BUT THAT DAY HER USUAL DRUG STORE WAS CLOSED AND SHE HAD TO GO TO THE YAMADA STORE, AN ESTABLISHMENT THAT ISN'T VERY POPULAR.
...AT CONSTANTLY VARYING TEMPERATURES, BETWEEN 40 TO 80 DEGREES.
THOSE MEDICINES WERE STORED IN URNS FOR YEARS...
...THEY GRADUALLY BEGAN TO UNDERGO CERTAIN CHANGES.
DURING THAT TIME...

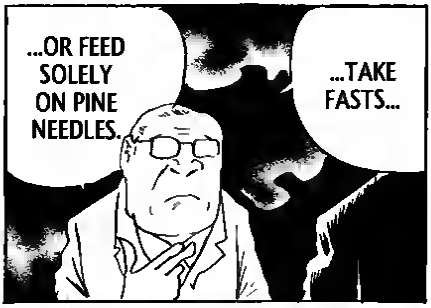
AS A RESULT, YOUR CONSUMPTION PROVOKED CERTAIN CHANGES IN YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM. IT ISN'T REALLY KNOWN IF IT ALTERED SOME PART OF YOUR BRAIN, OR POSSIBLY IT'S THAT NEW NEURAL CONNECTIONS EMERGED... IN ANY CASE, WHAT SEEMS CLEAR IS THAT THOSE MEDICINES ALLOWED YOU TO SEE WHAT NORMALLY ISN'T SEEN.

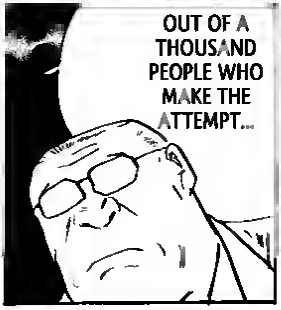
THOSE CHANGES EXTENDED OVER THE COURSE OF TEN YEARS, BECOMING INCREASINGLY SUBTLE AND MORE COMPLEX. NOT EVEN THE MOST ADVANCED MODERN MEDICAL TECHNIQUES COULD RELIABLY REPRODUCE THAT PHENOMENON... SUCH WAS THE EXTENT OF ITS COMPLEXITY AND ITS SUBTLETY.

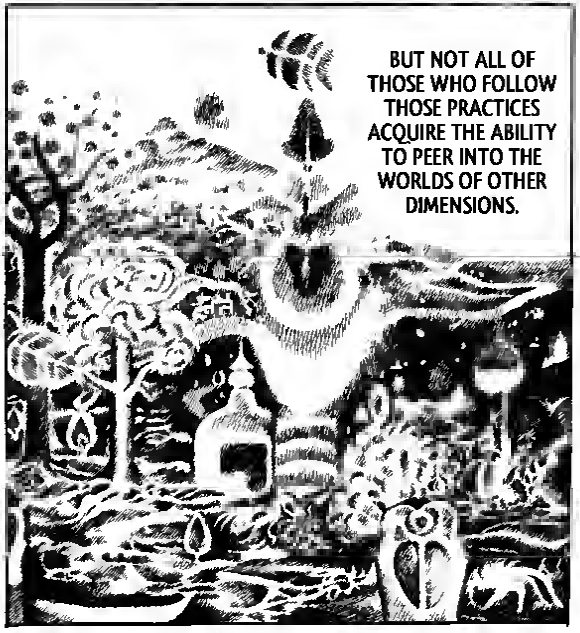

AS YOU KNOW, MANY ASCETICS MEDITATE UNDER A WATERFALL...


SO IT'S LIKE THE GIRL WAS MADE VISIBLE TO ME.
I GET IT.

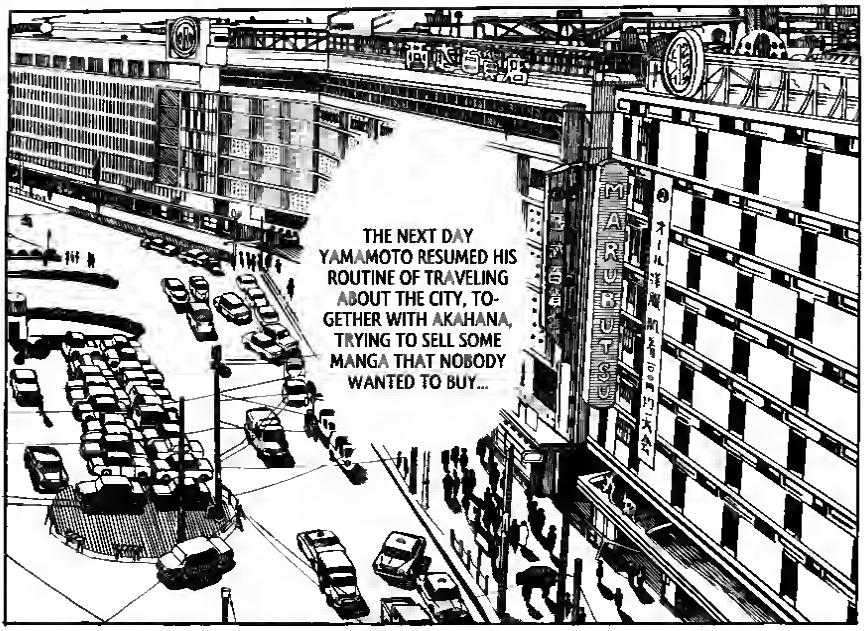

WHAT THEY SEEK IS TO UNDERGO NEURONAL CHANGES SIMILAR TO THOSE CAUSED BY THE EPILEPSY MEDICINE.


...OR FEED SOLELY ON PINE NEEDLES.
...TAKE FASTS...

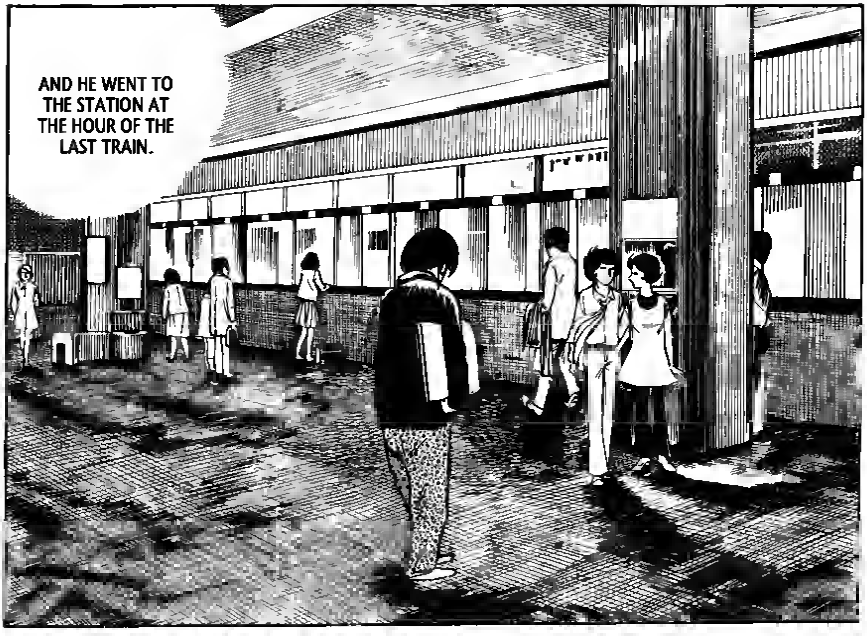

OUT OF A THOUSAND PEOPLE WHO MAKE THE ATTEMPT...


BUT NOT ALL OF THOSE WHO FOLLOW THOSE PRACTICES ACQUIRE THE ABILITY TO PEER INTO THE WORLDS OF OTHER DIMENSIONS.

...ONLY TWO OR THREE MANAGE TO BECOME TRUE MYSTICS.

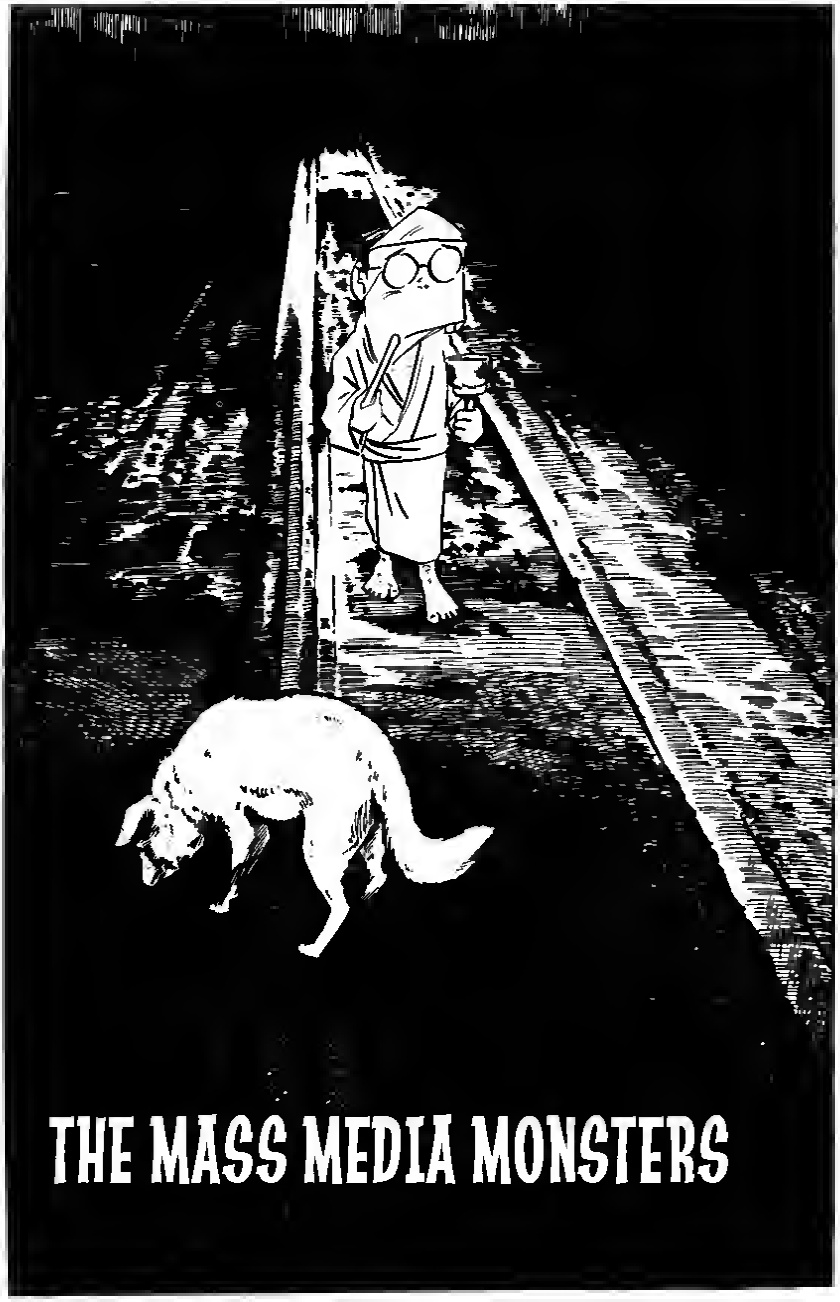

THE NEXT DAY YAMAMOTO RESUMED HIS ROUTINE OF TRAVELING ABOUT THE CITY, TOGETHER WITH AKAHANA, TRYING TO SELL SOME MANGA THAT NOBODY WANTED TO BUY...
MARUBUTSU

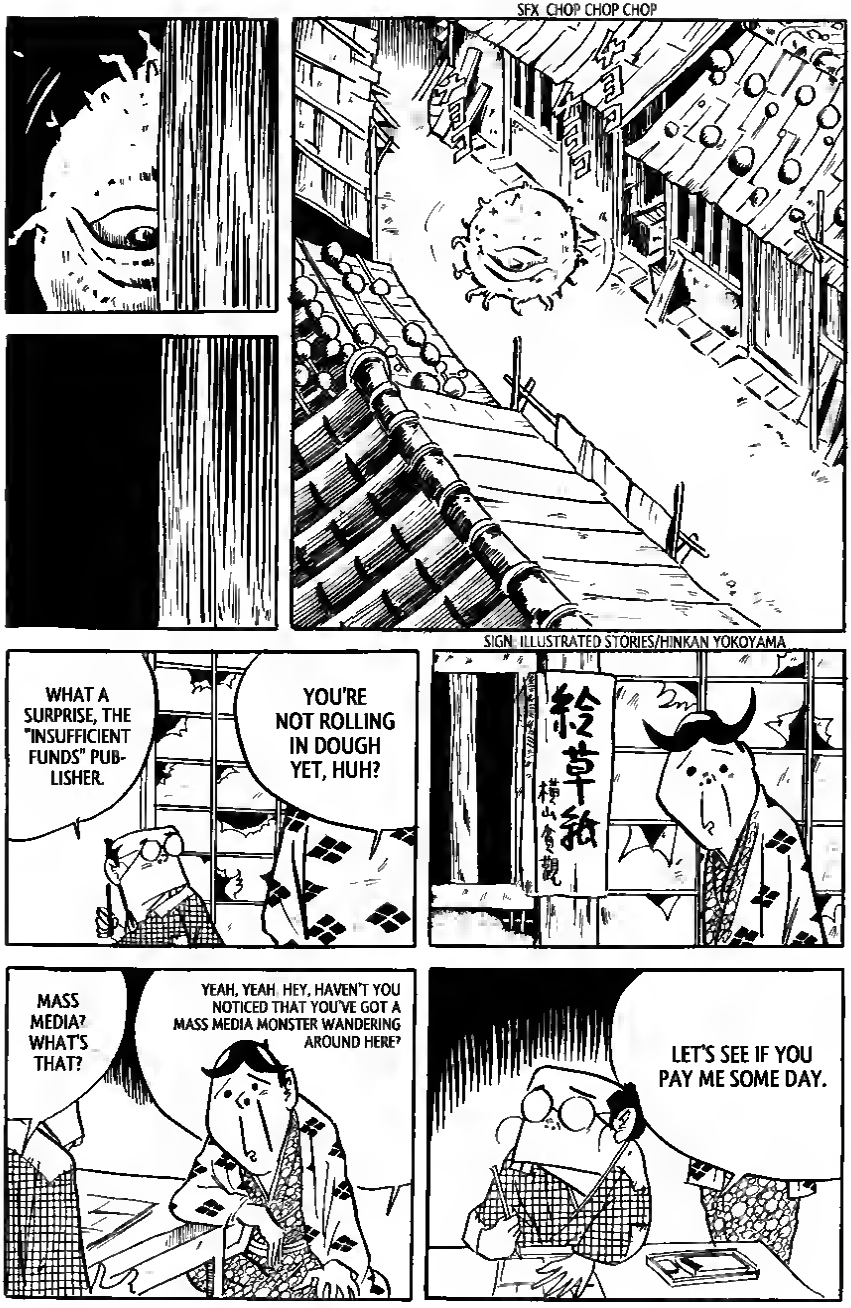
IN THE EVENING HE BEGAN TO FEEL HOPEFUL OF MEETING HER AGAIN.
パチンコ
完全冷房



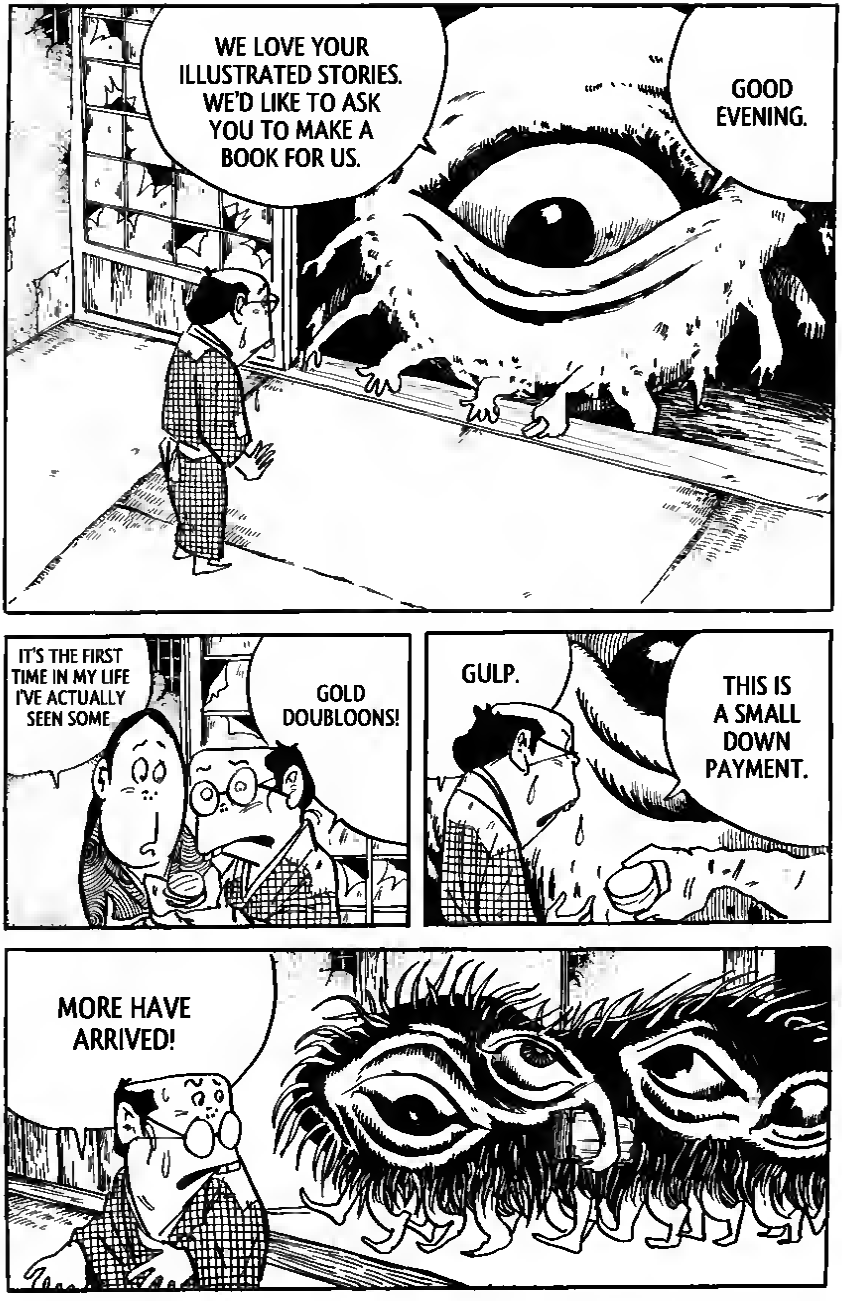
SFX: CHACKACHAKA CHACKACHAKA

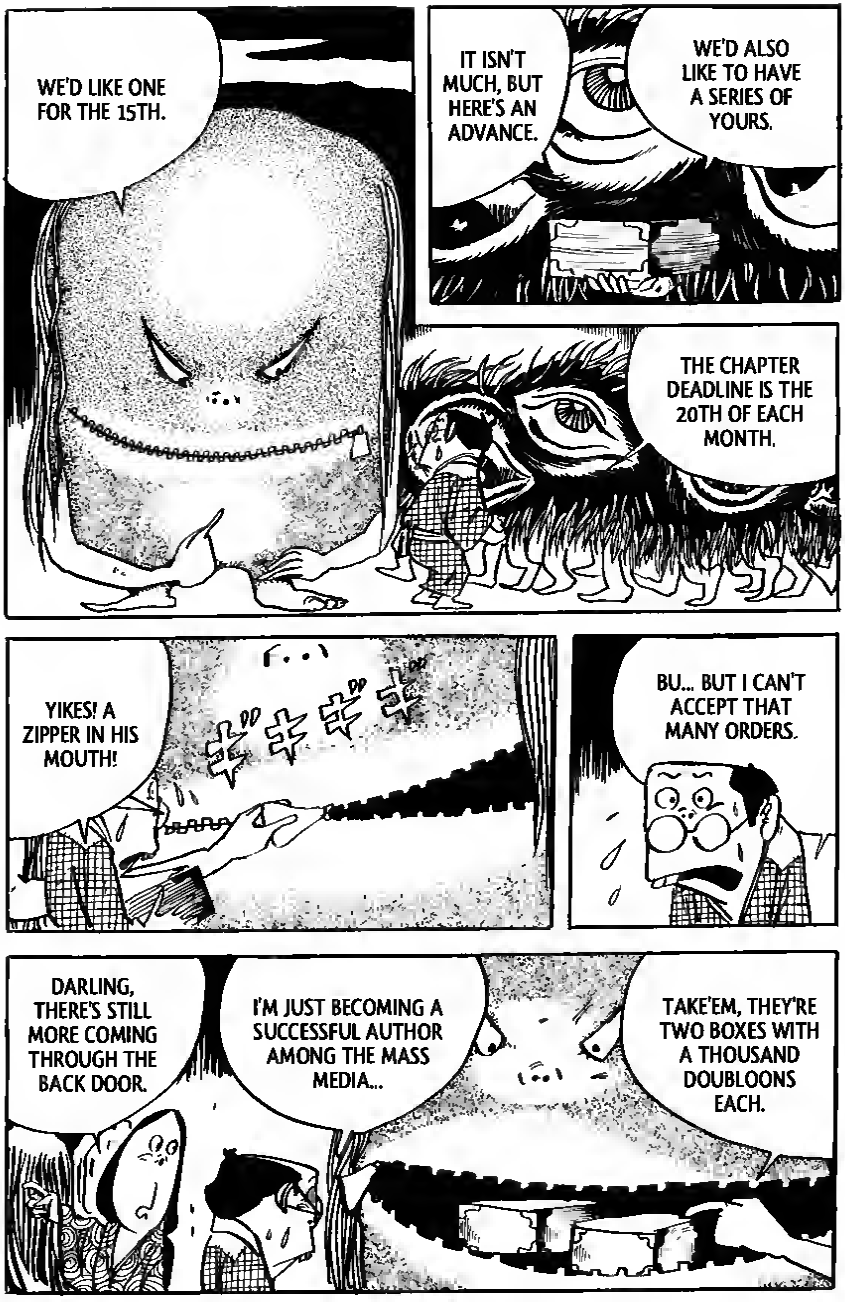
PRESENTED BY
HAPPY SCANS

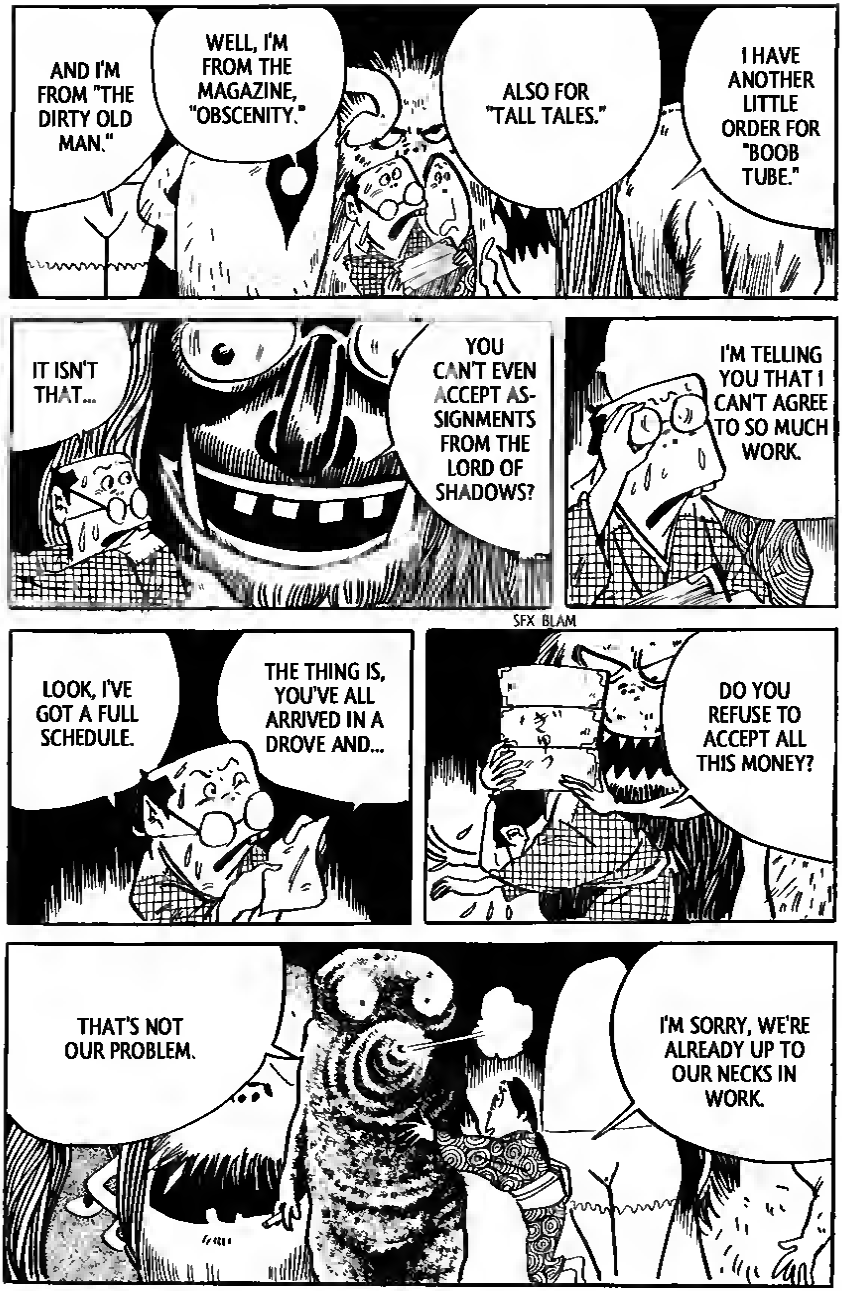

THE MASS MEDIA MONSTERS


SFX: CHOP CHOP CHOP
SIGN: ILLUSTRATED STORIES/HINKAN YOKOYAMA
WHAT A SURPRISE, THE "INSUFFICIENT FUNDS" PUBLISHER.
YOU'RE NOT ROLLING IN DOUGH YET, HUH?
絵草紙
横山貧観
MASS MEDIA? WHAT'S THAT?
YEAH, YEAH. HEY, HAVEN'T YOU NOTICED THAT YOU'VE GOT A MASS MEDIA MONSTER WANDERING AROUND HERE?
LET'S SEE IF YOU PAY ME SOME DAY.

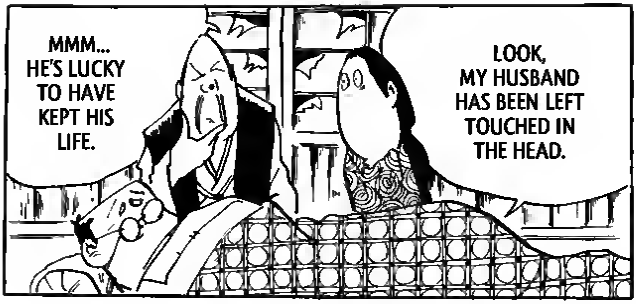
WITH LUCK YOU COULD BECOME FAMOUS AND SCORE A BUNDLE.
ALL CELEBRITIES HOOK UP WITH THEM.
?
DON'T YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM? THEY CAN MAKE YOU RICH
YOU WORK ME LIKE A SLAVE!
AND DON'T GO PAST THE DEADLINE.
WELL, DON'T FORGET THAT YOU HAVE A CHAPTER TO DO.
A YOKAI?
YOU HAVE A VISITOR. SOME KIND OF YOKAI.
GO AHEAD.
DARLING.
DON'T WORRY, IT'S A GOD OF FORTUNE
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT...?
QUICKLY, SERVE HIM TEA AND SWEETS.
IT WAS TRUE THAT I HAD A MASS MEDIA SEARCHING FOR ME!


WE LOVE YOUR ILLUSTRATED STORIES. WE'D LIKE TO ASK YOU TO MAKE A BOOK FOR US.
GOOD EVENING.
IT'S THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE I'VE ACTUALLY SEEN SOME
GOLD DOUBLOONS!
GULP.
THIS IS A SMALL DOWN PAYMENT.
MORE HAVE ARRIVED!

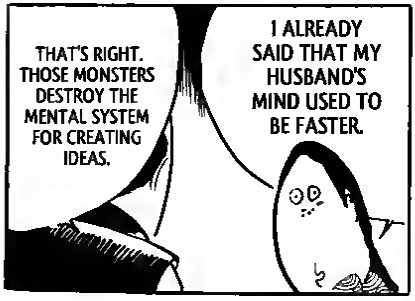

WE'D LIKE ONE FOR THE 15TH.
IT ISN'T MUCH, BUT HERE'S AN ADVANCE.
WE'D ALSO LIKE TO HAVE A SERIES OF YOURS.
THE CHAPTER DEADLINE IS THE 20TH OF EACH MONTH.
YIKES! A ZIPPER IN HIS MOUTH!
BU... BUT I CAN'T ACCEPT THAT MANY ORDERS.
DARLING, THERE'S STILL MORE COMING THROUGH THE BACK DOOR.
I'M JUST BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL AUTHOR AMONG THE MASS MEDIA...
TAKE'EM, THEY'RE TWO BOXES WITH A THOUSAND DOUBLOONS EACH.

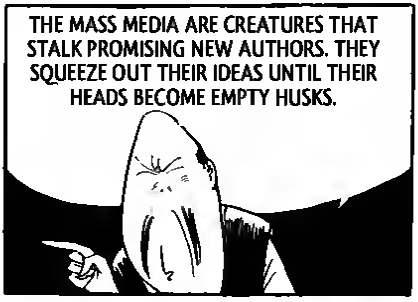

AND I'M FROM "THE DIRTY OLD MAN."
WELL, I'M FROM THE MAGAZINE, "OBSCENITY."
ALSO FOR "TALL TALES."
I HAVE ANOTHER LITTLE ORDER FOR "BOOB TUBE."
IT ISN'T THAT...
YOU CAN'T EVEN ACCEPT ASSIGNMENTS FROM THE LORD OF SHADOWS?
I'M TELLING YOU THAT I CAN'T AGREE TO SO MUCH WORK.
SFX BLAM
LOOK, I'VE GOT A FULL SCHEDULE.
THE THING IS, YOU'VE ALL ARRIVED IN A DROVE AND...
DO YOU REFUSE TO ACCEPT ALL THIS MONEY?
THAT'S NOT OUR PROBLEM.
I'M SORRY, WE'RE ALREADY UP TO OUR NECKS IN WORK.

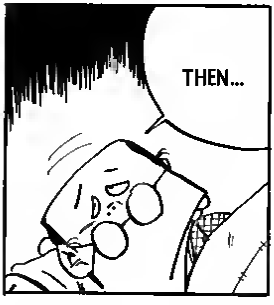
SFX PFFFT
I'VE ALREADY SPENT THREE NIGHTS WITHOUT SLEEPING.
DEAR, THE ONLY WAY TO FREE OURSELVES FROM THEM IS GOING TO BE DOING IT AS PIECEWORK.
I'M GOING TO DIE.
SFX SILENCE
THE LIFE OF MY HUSBAND IS IN DANGER. PLEASE, GENTLEMEN, HAVE SOME COMPASSION.
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU!?
SFX PLOP
I CAN'T GO ON!
NOT A SINGLE MONSTER IS LEAVING.

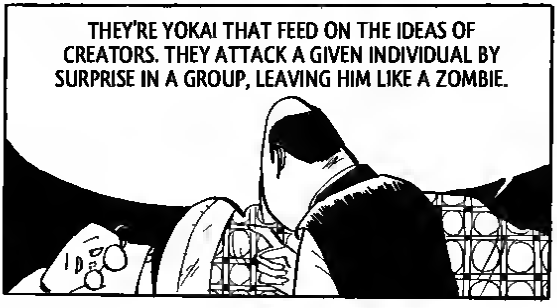


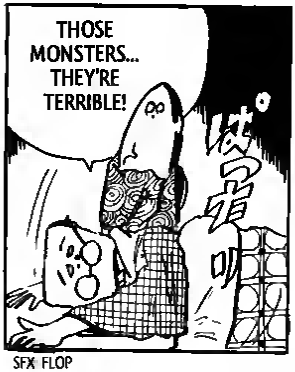
THE MASS MEDIA (ALSO KNOWN AS JOURNALISM) ARE UNKNOWN TO MEDICINE, SO THEY DECIDED TO CALL AN ILLUSTRATION ADVISER.

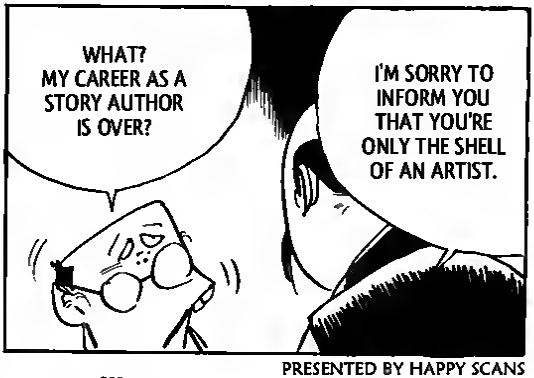

THAT'S RIGHT. THOSE MONSTERS DESTROY THE MENTAL SYSTEM FOR CREATING IDEAS.
I ALREADY SAID THAT MY HUSBAND'S MIND USED TO BE FASTER.


THE MASS MEDIA ARE CREATURES THAT STALK PROMISING NEW AUTHORS. THEY SQUEEZE OUT THEIR IDEAS UNTIL THEIR HEADS BECOME EMPTY HUSKS.




THEY'RE YOKAI THAT FEED ON THE IDEAS OF CREATORS. THEY ATTACK A GIVEN INDIVIDUAL BY SURPRISE IN A GROUP, LEAVING HIM LIKE A ZOMBIE.





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Cada nuevo libro de Shigeru Mizuki desvela una nueva puerta de entrada en su universo polimorfo, que parece mutar con cada nueva lectura Tras la delicada poesía de *NonNonBa*, el implacable manifiesto contra la guerra de *Operación Muerte* y las tribulaciones de *Kitaro*, en *3, Calle de los Misterios* nos descubre la vena escalofriante del maestro japonés

Shigeru Mizuki ha ganado el premio al mejor álbum en el Salón Internacional del Cómic de Angoulême 2007 por *NonNonBa*, y el premio "Esencial Patrimonio" de la edición 2009 del citado salón galo, por *Operación Muerte*, ambas publicadas por Astiberri.

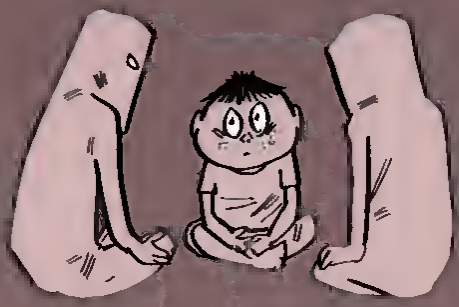
Otras obras del autor

Hitler: la novela gráfica
(Glénat, 2009)

NonNonBa
(Astiberri, 2010)

Operación Muerte
(Astiberri, 2010)

Kitaro 1
(Astiberri, 2010)



3, Street of Mysteries explores the fantastical-poetic vein that has forged Shigeru Mizuki's reputation in his country. The seven stories contained in this volume hold in common the obsessive ideas of immortality and of life after death. Sagely blending the ranges of black humor, drama, and morality, Mizuki shows once more his profound understanding of the human soul.

Passionate for folk tales and for the magic that filters through the crevices of the everyday life, Shigeru Mizuki, the author of NonNonBa, Onwards Toward Our Noble Deaths and Gegege Kitaro, explores the uncertain frontier that separates the world of the spirits from that of the living.

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